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OPINION METER

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CW petitions breach 11,000-mark

'Foregone conclusion that transition period needs to be extended'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Despite the low-number scare in early November, the number of foreign workers being petitioned by their employers for Commonwealth-only worker status has now breached the 11,000-mark—a key indicator of the CNMI's current need for foreign labor. At one point, there were some 30,000 foreign workers in the CNMI.

See CW on Page 4

Congressional hearing sought on Compact impact report findings

»NMI gets \$33M of \$55M in reported costs of hosting FAS citizens in 2004-2010

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) and four other U.S. House of Representatives members have asked for a hearing on a recently released U.S. Government Accountability Office report that cited



Sablan

"weaknesses" in territories' collection and reporting on the impact of migration from the Freely Associated States.

GAO found that the CNMI, Guam, and Hawaii counted \$1 billion in costs from FAS immigrants for education, health, public safety, and social services from 2004 to 2010, Sa-

See CONGRESSIONAL on Page 4

FAST FACTS

As of Dec. 9, 2011

■ Number of CW petitions filed:	5,380
■ Number of foreign workers petitioned:	11,019
Saipan	9,920
Tinian	739
Rota	360
■ Number of employers that filed petitions:	1,900

SOURCE: USCIS

Safety violations found at Head Start centers

By KIMBERLY HEFLING
AP EDUCATION WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—A machete left near an outdoor play area. Household chemicals accessible to preschoolers. Widespread failures to conduct criminal background checks of employees.

ON THE NET

Link to the 24 audits of Head Start grantees:
<http://bit.ly/tLJycZ>
HHS' Office of Inspector General:
<http://oig.hhs.gov/>
Administration for Families and Children:
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov>

These violations and others were found at Head Start centers across the country, according to

See SAFETY on Page 4



IN THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON

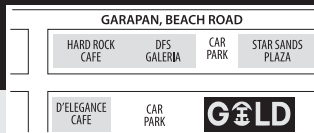
Members of the Saipan Seniors Advisory Council join members of Korean Women's Association of Saipan at the Aging Center yesterday. The association gave away gift bags to the *man'amko* as part of their annual tradition. The group, led by president Keum Joo Lee, gave away gift bags that contained shirts, shampoo and conditioner, and choco pies. **See story on Page 7**

CLARISSA V. DAVID

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OLA not taking a position on FICA tax exemptions yet

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta said his office has been made aware of the purported expiration of federal tax exemptions for certain foreign workers in the CNMI, but they have yet to take a position on it.

"I haven't studied it to the point where I'm prepared to take a position but I understand there are merits on both sides why the Department of Treasury came to



Babauta

[in paying] FICA taxes," he told reporters on Monday.

The Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes cover Social Security and Medicare.

Babauta also acknowledged receiving a copy of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's letter asking Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) to speak with U.S. Treasury's Internal Revenue Service "to seek whether this [FICA tax] ruling can be retracted."

Babauta, along with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, was furnished a copy of the letter.

"It's a fairly a new issue so... I want to make sure I understand both sides before coming with a position one way or the other," Babauta said of the content of the Chamber letter.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that the

its conclusion about the non-continuing exempt status of employers and employees

Fitial administration has yet to send a letter to either IRS or the Social Security Administration on the issue.

"It is still undergoing legal review," he said.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos said in a separate interview that the Fitial administration wants to get clarification from IRS whether it would really start requiring Filipino, as well as Korean, workers in the CNMI to pay FICA taxes because of federalization of CNMI immigration. These workers were previously exempt from paying these taxes.

Inos said a copy of a redacted IRS letter he has seen could only be just a response to a particular case, but not as a general ruling or policy. This is why the administration wants clarification from IRS.

Both the Fitial administration and Chamber had said that requiring employees and employers to pay FICA taxes is an added cost during these times when businesses barely earn revenue.

A minimum wage earner in the CNMI pays over \$45 in FICA taxes a month. Their employers' share is almost \$62 a month.

Ruling out in Labor case being disputed by company since '07

Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman yesterday issued a ruling in a labor case that a company has been fighting against since 2007.

Wiseman affirmed the Labor secretary's decision that upheld a Labor administrative hearing office's order that found the company Great Sunshine Corp. not financially able to meet the obligations of employment contracts for seven alien workers.

Wiseman determined as proper the administrative hearing office's determination that the company was not able to meet the financial obligations of the employment contracts.

The judge also found proper Labor's administrative hearing office's determination to deny transfer relief for company manager Dan Li.

According to records, Great Sunshine Corp. operated a gift shop and karaoke bar in Garapan, Saipan. It employed 15 persons prior to this labor case arising.

Great Sunshine reported losses for fiscal year 2007, yet appeared to be employing a large number of employees despite the type and volume of business it conducted.

In 2007, Great Sunshine submitted applications to the CNMI Department of Labor to employ, renew, or transfer seven non-resident workers: Dong Shun Chen, Jin Ling Guo, Yang Liu, Han Wei, Ying Jun Zhang, Li Xiu Zhu, and Dan Li.

In February 2008, Labor de-

nied the applications, citing a lack of sufficient income to justify the employment of the seven workers. Great Sunshine and the workers appealed the denial.

In May 2009, Labor's administrative hearing officer determined that the denials were appropriate given the company's insufficient funds.

The hearing office granted relief for four of the workers, but denied transfer relief to Great Sunshine manager Dan Li based on his questionable management of company fiscal affairs and prolonged absence from the CNMI.

In June 2009, Great Sunshine appealed the decision to the Labor secretary, who later affirmed the denial order.

Great Sunshine filed in August 2009 a petition for judicial review before the Superior Court.

In affirming Labor's order, Wiseman said that Labor's administrative hearing office found, based on the evidence presented, that Great Sunshine was operating at a loss and was not financially sustainable.

Wiseman said the Labor administrative hearing office was suspicious of possible illegal or improper activities in the management of Great Sunshine.

"Because transfer relief is entirely discretionary and no right to transfer exists, the denial of Li's transfer was supported by substantial evidence and not improper," the judge said. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

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Rotary elects officers for 2012-2013

The Rotary Club of Saipan unanimously elected yesterday its new set of officers for 2012-2013.

Incoming officers next year are Pete Shilling, president; Laila Boyer, vice president; Richard Cody, secretary; Yosh Gabaldon, treasurer; Jay Santos, Club Service director; Curtis Dancoe, Community Service director; Kelley Butcher, Vocational Service director; Pete Igitol, International Service director; Glen Perez, Foundation Service director; and Jeff Boyer, New Generation Service director.

Wayne Gillespie will be sergeant-at-arms emeritus.

Gabaldon, Santos, Butcher, and Boyer accepted to serve in the same position for another year.

The incoming officers, who will be inducted next year, will serve from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.

Meanwhile, the group will be holding its annual Christmas party with the theme "Christmas by the Sea" on Dec. 20 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Rotarians are encouraged to bring an unwrapped toy which will be donated to the Salvation Army.

The group will convene again next year. (Clarissa V. David)

Trial of man accused of sexually abusing 2 girls starts

The jury trial of a 41-year-old man accused of sexually abusing two female minors began Monday in the Superior Court.

The prosecution is planning to call 12 witnesses against the suspect, Alvin P. Iglecias. As of 12pm yesterday, the prosecution

had already called at least two witnesses. The trial will continue today, Wednesday.

Assistant attorney general Shelli Neal is prosecuting the case. Assistant public defenders Douglas Hartig and Benjamin Petersburg are counsels

for Iglecias.

Associate judge Kenneth L. Govendo is presiding over the trial.

Detective Melinda Villanueva stated in her report that a police officer responded to a residence in Dandan in May 2010 to investigate a report about the sexual

abuse of a minor.

Villanueva said that when the police officer arrived at the house, the complainant was crying and appeared very upset. The complainant asked that the two girls be taken from the house for their own safety.

Villanueva said that Iglecias has been allegedly abusing one victim for four years already.

Villanueva said the second girl stated that the defendant also touched her private parts before, but that he had stopped since then. (Ferdie de la Torre)

Alleged victim testifies in EEOC sex harassment suit

A band singer testified yesterday in the ongoing jury trial in federal court in the sexual harassment lawsuit filed on her behalf by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The singer burst into tears a couple of times whenever the questions by the parties' counsels focused on the early morning of Jan. 2, 2008, when Tomas Alegre, the former F&B manager of Saipan Grand Hotel, allegedly made sexual advances at her inside her room.

After the singer completed her testimony in the afternoon, an excerpt of a deposition by police officer Raquel Ogu-moro was read in court. EEOC trial attorney Derek Li read the questions and district court law clerk Quynh Chi Nguyen read Ogu-moro's answers. Ogu-moro is currently off-island.

In the deposition, Ogu-moro said it was she who responded to the hotel on Jan. 2, 2008, after receiving a call about the sexual assault incident. The

police officer testified that the singer was emotional when she arrived at the scene and that Alegre was there too.

Ogu-moro said she decided to arrest Alegre for sexual assault and disturbing the peace. The officer said she found the singer's statement to be "trustworthy."

Saipan Tribune left the courtroom after Ogu-moro's statements were read.

EEOC filed the lawsuit on behalf of the singer against Asia Pacific Hotels Inc. and Tan Holdings. The trial began on Monday.

The singer is now based in Manila. In her testimony, she related to the court what happened on the early morning hours of Jan. 2, 2008, that led to her complaint against Alegre. She said she filed a complaint with the Philippine Consulate General, Federal Ombudsman, and also at the Department of Public Safety the following day.

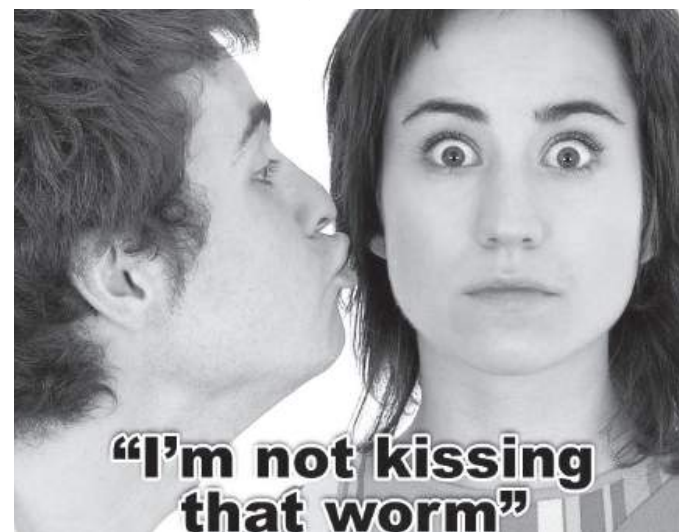
She said she was provided a rape kit at the Commonwealth

Health Center, but the results showed that she was not raped.

She said she was taken to a shelter where she stayed for eight to nine months. She said she stayed on the island because she was waiting for her case and for personal reasons.

During cross-examination by attorney Steven Pixley, counsel for Asia Pacific Hotels Inc., which operates the Saipan Grand Hotel, and Tan Holdings, she said she did not encounter any problems with other hotel managers other than Alegre. She also said that she never complained about the incident to Asia Pacific Hotels Inc.

The trial will continue today, Wednesday. (Ferdie de la Torre)



Sure enough, there it was. A microscopic worm living just beneath the surface of Jesse's eye. His only symptom - redness. The thought of that worm undulating like a tiny maggot hula dancer was enough for Carmen to stop kissing Jesse. Marianas Eye Institute's Dr. David Khorram put together the team that extracted the worm using lasers and advanced microsurgical techniques. When the bandage came off, the first thing Jesse got was a juicy kiss from Carmen.

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	Aetna High Option	\$206.90	No Dental Plan
	Aetna Low Option	\$191.39	No Dental Plan
	StayWell Annual savings = \$1,999 + Potential Refund of \$ 750		
Family	STAYWELL	\$208.00	\$265.00
	Aetna High Option	\$322.96	No Dental Plan
	Aetna Low Option	\$298.78	No Dental Plan
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Out of Pocket Annual Maximum:
Single = \$ 1,500; Family = \$4,500

*Some conditions apply

AETNA BENEFITS

No Refund Program
Common Law Spouses Covered at Higher Rates
70 - 80% coverage for off-island inpatient care

Out of Pocket Annual Maximums:
High Option: Single = \$ 4,000; family = \$ 12,000
Low Option: Single = \$ 10,000; family = \$ 30,000

Release OK'd for suspect in alleged beating of 70-year-old man

Superior Court associate judge Joseph James Norita Camacho allowed yesterday a suspect in the beating up of a 70-year-old man in Dandan to post a \$16,250 unsecured bond.

Camacho released Juan Laniyo Norita Jr. to his brother, Joseph Norita, who will serve as a third-party custodian.

Camacho said a person charged with a crime should not be denied freedom unless there is a good reason. "Any person accused of committing a crime is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law," he added.

Last week, Camacho denied Juan Norita's request

to post a property bond and be released to his wife. The judge determined that the wife was not a suitable third party custodian.

Last Friday, Camacho granted the request of Juan Norita's co-defendant and son, Jerome K. Norita, to post a \$16,250 unsecured bond and be released to

two third party custodians.

The Office of the Attorney General opposed the motion to reduce bail.

Jerome Norita, 23, his 48-year-old father, Juan Norita Jr., and another man are accused of attacking 70-year-old Pantaleon P. De Jillas and his son, Ernie Matagolai De Jillas, on Dec. 2,

2011 at 7:19am, along Flame Tree Road in Dandan.

The prosecutor said Pantaleon De Jillas had just been involved in an accident and had stopped to render aid to a girl that he had hit with his pickup truck.

The defendants came and allegedly started punching and

kicking the old man, fracturing the victim's jaw.

As Ernie De Jillas approached to help his father, the defendants allegedly began hurling pieces of cinder block at him. One piece of the cinder block struck Ernie De Jillas in the ear, cutting him. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

CW

From Page 1

As of Friday, Dec. 9, the number of foreign workers being petitioned for CW status reached 11,019. This is over 82 percent of the 13,399 estimated "potentially eligible" for CW status, based on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Sept. 7 final rule.

Of the total 11,019 petitioned alien workers for CW status so far, 9,920 are on Saipan, 739 are on Tinian, and 360 are on Rota.

Marie Thérèse Sebrechts, regional media manager at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, said yesterday that USCIS California Service Center had data entered 5,380 I129-CW petitions as of Dec. 9.

"The petitions were filed by approximately 1,900 different employers. A total of 11,019 CW1 workers are sponsored on these petitions," she said.

USCIS also released yesterday a question-and-answer guideline

for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless individuals" seeking to apply for a parole that, if granted, would allow them to lawfully remain in the CNMI until Dec. 31, 2012. **(See Page 8)**

Josie Reyes, processing agent at Sunflower Marketing Corp., an accounting and document handling services firm, said yesterday that most of the clients they assisted in filing CW petitions have already received notices of receipt of petitions.

"We are confident that they will all be granted. We followed the instructions properly and hopefully none will be denied," said Reyes, who attended one of USCIS' sessions on how to file a Form I-129CW.

Form I-129CW is the form used by an employer to petition an alien to temporarily work as a nonimmigrant in the CNMI as a CW-1 transitional worker.

Reyes said the CW petitions they filed covered at least 92 foreign workers. She said they filed the petitions between

Nov. 18 and Nov. 28, a critical deadline.

Those whose petitions are filed after Nov. 28 are not supposed to start working until they have received a grant of CW status. These foreign nationals should also be in a "lawful immigration status in the CNMI" even if the worker is not currently employed. A "lawful immigration status" can mean having valid parole.

USCIS saw a surge in the number of filings on or toward the Nov. 28 deadline. Hundreds crowded the post office in Chalan Kanoa for the CW filings, as well as for requests for humanitarian parole, mostly among those who were not able to find a new employer before their umbrella permits expired on Nov. 27.

Press secretary Angel Demapan, when asked for comment, said yesterday that the latest number of alien workers petitioned for CW status is a "more realistic figure than the preliminary numbers that were

released."

"The figures indicate that there is still a decent demand for skilled foreign workers, but more so, that there are still many companies that are braving the economic challenges and making positive contributions to the local economy," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

'Foregone conclusion'

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) said yesterday the latest figure shows that the CNMI is still dependent on foreign workers "and it's not going to change anytime soon. That's just the reality."

Yumul, a former Ways and Means Committee chair, said it's going to be difficult to let go of these many skilled foreign workers to help fuel the economy by the end of the transition period on Dec. 31, 2014.

"So it's a foregone conclusion that the transition would be extended by five years," he said, unless there's a dramatic change in the way residents are trained and educated to fill the void that

will be left if the number of foreign workers is brought down to "zero" by the end of 2014.

Other government officials have long said they would push for the extension of the transition period beyond 2014.

The transition period allows for an orderly transition and gives individuals time to identify an appropriate visa classification under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce also earlier said that the number of foreign workers petitioned is the figure that the weak economy can hire or absorb right now. DHS put an over 22,000 cap on the annual number of transitional workers.

Both the business sector and the government also expressed concern over those foreign workers who are still in the CNMI but couldn't find employment because of the down economy.

Many of these unemployed aliens have already applied for parole with USCIS even before

USCIS announced the availability of a one-year parole for eligible aliens. Those eligible for this type of parole are covered by Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's (Ind-MP) H.R. 1466, which seeks a grant of CNMI-only resident status to four groups of aliens.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's administration is "tentatively" planning to file a motion for preliminary injunction against USCIS' decision to grant parole for most of those covered by HR 1466. These include immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain stateless individuals. The governor said many of these eligible for parole could be a "burden" to the CNMI and would still compete for jobs with the local population.

While USCIS reported that there have been CW petitions rejected, it has yet to release data on denials and approvals.

Sebrechts said yesterday that USCIS won't have approval/denial data "until after biometrics."

CONGRESSIONAL

From Page 1

blan said. Yet the U.S. government provided only \$210 million to these U.S. insular areas as compensation.

Sablan said the CNMI reported \$55 million in costs and received \$33 million from the federal government.

The CNMI saw a drop in the number of FAS migrants, from 3,570 FAS in 2003 to 2,100 in 2008.

"GAO recommended improvements in how the Interior Department and the U.S. insular areas account for these

Compact impact costs and noted the discrepancy between reported costs and compensation," Sablan said. "A hearing will provide further opportunity to make sure that the insular areas do not bear an undue burden from federal agreements with our neighbors in the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands."

Sablan was joined by Guam Delegate Madeleine Bordallo, American Samoa Delegate Eni Faleomavaega and Hawaii Rep. Mazie Hirono.

Their Dec. 18 letter, a copy of which was obtained yesterday, was addressed to House

Committee on Natural Resources chair Rep. Doc Hastings and ranking member Rep. Edward Markey.

GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, released in November a report titled, "Compacts of Free Association: Improvements Needed to Assess and Address Growing Migration."

The report stated that some of the affected jurisdictions "did not accurately define Compact migrants, account for federal funding that supplemented local expenditures, or include revenue received from Compact migrants."

That GAO report was initiated as a result of a joint request

made by bipartisan members of Congress from Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Arkansas, and the CNMI in order to assess the true impacts of Compact migration and to guide policy discussion on improvements to the implementation of the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003 or Public Law 108-188.

Under the Compacts, FAS citizens—those from the Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae), Marshall Islands and Palau—may live and work in the U.S. without a visa as lawful non-immigrants or habitual residents.

"While the Compacts are critical to our national security, and protecting U.S. interests in the Pacific region, the rising costs of providing social services to Compact migrants in affected jurisdictions must be addressed," the four U.S. Congress members said.

Sablan, Bordallo, Faleomavaega, and Hirono said the GAO findings provide the most thorough and accurate assessment to date of the costs and impacts of Compact migrants in affected jurisdictions, and addresses the inadequacy of federal funds associated with providing services to Compact migrants.

They said GAO outlines sev-

eral policy recommendations that could improve the administration's implementation of PL 108-188, and ease the burden currently shouldered by state and territorial governments.

"In these difficult budgetary times, it is important that we thoroughly consider each of these recommendations to ease the financial impacts of Compact migration. We strongly urge you to convene a hearing on this matter so that Congress can further explore the finding and recommendations found in the GAO report," the lawmakers said.

A hearing date has yet to be scheduled.

SAFETY

From Page 1

a report released Tuesday by the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services. Head Start is the federal program with roots in President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty that today provides early education services to nearly 1 million poor kids nationwide. The federal government gives grant dollars to public, non-profit and for-profit programs to provide the services.

Other safety violations found at centers: A screw protruding from a bookcase at child-height level in Longmont, Colo.; a children's bathroom in Edna, Texas, without lighting for months; and

expired infant formula found in the refrigerator in the District of Columbia.

The IG's review was compiled using 24 audits of Head Start grantees running 175 facilities in seven states—Connecticut, New York, Georgia, Wisconsin, Texas, Colorado and California—and District of Columbia from May 2009 to October 2010. While the review was of just a fraction of the approximately 1,600 Head Start grantees, it still raises red flags about the safety of children in such programs.

All told, according to the review:

■ Twenty-one of 24 grantees did not comply fully with federal Head Start or state requirements to conduct criminal and

other background checks;

■ Nearly 90 percent of the facilities had toxic chemicals such as markers labeled "keep out of reach of children" and cleaning supplies accessible to children;

■ More than 70 percent had open or broken gates leading to parking lots, streets or unsupervised areas and inadequate or broken fences;

■ More than half had playground equipment that was not in good repair with problems such as protruding bolts, broken climbing apparatuses and elevated platforms without protective guards.

The IG recommended that the Administration for Families and Children, which falls under HHS and oversees Head Start, conduct onsite monitor-

ing to ensure that centers comply with health and safety regulations. It also called for the agency to determine whether it should seek legislation to require periodic background checks for Head Start employees and amend current policies to require that prospective or current employees be disqualified or terminated if they've been convicted of sexual abuse of a child or other forms of child abuse.

In response, the Administration for Families and Children said it "takes health and safety regulations very seriously and regularly monitors" under safety regulations.

Of the 24 grantees audited, three have since had Head Start dollars revoked and the

others corrected the deficiencies, the Administration for Families and Children said. It also said it is reviewing the suggested policy changes.

Ensuring quality in Head Start programs has been an ongoing issue. Last month at a stop in Yeadon, Pa., President Barack Obama called Head Start "an outstanding program and a critical investment," but he said more accountability was needed. Under new rules that he announced, lower-performing Head Start programs will have to compete for funding if they have deficiencies discovered in their onsite review or don't meet other standards.

In most cases, the centers said in letters included in the audits that they had taken action to fix

the problems found.

In Waterbury, Conn., for example, where the machete was found unattended along with a gas-powered hedge trimmer near a children's play area at a facility operated by the non-profit New Opportunities Inc., policies have been changed so that work crews do routine maintenance in the evenings and weekends when children are not around, said Toni Hirst, the chief administrative officer, in a phone interview. She said children were never in close proximity to the machete and hedge trimmer. She said the look at the center by the outside reviewers was helpful.

"By no means would we do anything that would lead a child to harm," Hirst said.

Number of arrests increased by 30 percent—Mafnas



Commissioner Ray Mafnas of the Department of Public Safety, right, talks about the need for community partnerships to address the growing policing needs in the CNMI during the Rotary Club of Saipan membership meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan yesterday.

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
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REPORTER

As of yesterday, the Department of Public Safety had 10,561 misdemeanor and felony cases on its caseload, with the number of incarcerations and arrests seeing an “unprecedented” increase of 30 percent in the last few months, according to Commissioner Ray Mafnas.

Speaking at the Rotary Club of Saipan general membership meeting yesterday, Mafnas disclosed that the DPS handles about 40 complaints or calls everyday, processes five to nine arrestees, and investigates seven to 10 crimes.

With only 13 detectives on its roster, Mafnas said the agency plans to use “new technology” through a database and case management systems.

Mafnas said plans are underway to find a vendor that would provide these services, which will allow them to better handle their workload problem.

“It has to be procured and implemented. That is furiously underway. We are diligently pursuing all avenues to implement this before summer next year,” Mafnas said.

Another project in the works, he said, is putting together a “reserve police force” who will be “trained and certified and expected to work at least eight hours per month.” “We can certify them and this will augment the financial limitations that we are currently facing today in the Commonwealth.”

Mafnas noted that community policing is one of the important pillars of policing, along with human resources, financial resources, and physical resources.

“Community policing is the only way to successfully provide excellent police services to our community. In other words, community partnership is inseparable from successful policing,” he said.

In support of this community partnership, Mafnas said they plan to have a police foundation that will provide assistance and

support to DPS.

“This will be strictly managed outside of the police department by non-police officers or anyone associated with any law enforcement organization,” he said.

‘Changing’ and ‘costly’

Mafnas emphasized that the face of policing in the CNMI is changing amid the cultural and ethnic diversity on the islands.

“The Commonwealth state police division is changing. It will never be the same again because the changes must come as a result of fast-changing social, economic, and political landscape,” he said.

Mafnas also noted that the rising number of incarcerations is “costly” as this means an increase in expenses for feeding, providing clothing, and other needs to those incarcerated.

Increased police monitoring in Marpi

With the onset of the busiest season for tourists in the CNMI, the Department of Public Safety is planning to monitor all vehicles that visit Marpi and have hourly patrols to deter crimes against tourists in the area.

DPS Commissioner Ray Mafnas, who was guest speaker at yesterday’s Rotary Club of Saipan meeting, said they will create two posts to take videos and photographs of every vehicle that enters and exits tourist sites in Marpi.

He said that DPS personnel now also patrol Marpi sites “every hour, on the hour” to discourage criminals.

“Every community knows that the police cannot be present in every part of the community at all times but consistency is important. So that is now taking place on a daily basis,” said Mafnas.

These efforts, he said, will continue “and we don’t have any plans to stop it.”

The commissioner pointed out

that there are no more reported crimes happening in Marpi recently “because we believe that we have the individual responsible behind bars.”

Mafnas disclosed that they also plan to procure new vehicles that will be sent out to villages “to maintain law and order, protect life and property, and deter crime.”

“Where we fail to deter crime, we need to investigate... Ideally, we don’t want crimes to be committed but it’s going to happen one way or the other,” he added. (Clarissa V. David)

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Weekly Planner

Monday: Reading Workshop, Writer's Club, Speech & Drama Society

Tuesday: Dance, Music, Indoor Games

Wednesday: Golfing, Swimming, Field day

Thursday: Educational Field Trip & Fun Field Trips

Friday: *Mon-Sat: FREE Waiting Room until 7 PM

Morning Classes include:
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Afternoon Classes PE Classes:
Mon: Field Day, Soccer, Capture the Flag, Ultimate Frisbee, etc.
Wed: Swimming at CK Beach Club
Thurs: J&P Golf Academy with a Golf Pro Instructor
Tue/Fri: 2 types of Dance Classes: Cultural and Hip-Hop
- Music Class: Acoustic, Classical and Contemporary
- Indoor games: Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune, etc.

Saturdays include:
- Morning Educational Trips: Museum Tour, Fire Station, American Memorial Park, etc.
- Afternoon Fun trips such as going to PIC Water Park, Jungle Wave, Jungle Trekking, Managaha and many more!

Fitial to submit written report on 2011 State of the Commonwealth

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidEE_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial will be submitting a written report to the Legislature on the 2011 State of the Commonwealth before the end of the year to comply with the annual report required by the CNMI Constitution, despite a proposal from the Senate for him to deliver an address on Feb. 14, 2012.

"The governor will submit a

written report as mandated by the Constitution," press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday.

Fitial also submitted a written report to the Legislature in 2010 toward the end of the year, deviating from his previous years' practice of delivering a SOCA mid-year.

Even if Senate President Paul Manglona's Senate Joint Resolution 17-18 is adopted,

it will be for the 2012 report, thus skipping 2011, which is not something the administration wants to do.

Senate Joint Resolution 17-18 also asks Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) to report on federal matters concerning the CNMI during a joint session of the House and Senate.

House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan) said yesterday that the House leadership

has yet to discuss whether to request a SOCA or just a written report from the governor.

Article III Section 9 (b) of the CNMI Constitution requires the governor to report "at least annually to the Legislature regarding the affairs of the Commonwealth and new measures that are necessary or desirable."

It says the report should include a comprehensive annual financial report.

Number of Medicare Part D enrollees doubles

This year's insurance open enrollment period has boosted the number of *man'amko* who are enrolled in the Medicare Part D drug plan, according to a statement issued by Brabu Pharmacy.

"We have processed 125 new applications, 99 of which

have already been approved," said Raena Celis, Brabu Pharmacy's customer service specialist. "We couldn't be happier knowing that so many of our *man'amko* have been successfully enrolled."

Brabu co-owner Ted Parker credited the media for the suc-

cess of this enrollment period through great coverage and public service announcements.

"People showed up in record numbers, many telling us about the difficulties they experienced both on the phone to United Health Care, the AARP MedicareRx plan providers and online. Once we were directed to the www.medicare.gov website by Congressman Killili's office, the applications could be completed easily in minutes," Parker said.

The number of new CNMI enrollees this year will increase UHC membership by over 100 percent.

Prior to this enrollment period, Chad Szczepanski, UHC sales and marketing manager, reported that their company had only 100 active members in the region since Part D was offered in 2006.

Brabu co-owner, Kathy Yuk-

navage alerted UHC of the difficulties being experienced by *man'amko* wishing to avail of the insurance program. Sales distribution compliance manager R. Chris Krafft wrote back stating, "We have investigated and determined that the telephone number was routed incorrectly." UHC has since corrected the phone system.

"We hope that next year's enrollment will be much easier for everyone," said Yuknavage. "What a great way to start the Christmas season. It's been really wonderful."

In any event, Celis pledged to continue providing assistance next enrollment period.

Any Medicare Part D applicants that have not yet received their cards in the mail or have other questions may call Brabu Pharmacy at 233-AMOT (2668) to check their enrollment status. **(Brabu)**



CLARISSA V. DAVID

GREEN INITIATIVE

Century Insurance finance manager Rene Cariasos digs a hole on the ground where a tree sapling will be planted at the launch of the Tan Holdings Tree Planting Project at the Susupe Beach Park last Saturday. Some 50 Tan Holdings executives and managers, led by president Jerry Tan, took part in the event, which involved the planting of 70 saplings that were provided by the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance.

Man'amko to host ground golf tourney

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The island's elderly are planning to host a ground golf tournament at the Aging Center

grounds on Dec. 27.

Aging program coordinator Walter Manglona said the entrance fee for tournament participants is \$5 each for male congregates and \$2 each for female congregates.

Manglona explained that the discrepancy is due to the fact that there are more females than males at the center.

According to Manglona, the tournament will be a fundraising event for the Saipan Seniors Advisory Council to augment their funds for their various programs at the center.

Ten percent of the total fee collection will go to the *man'amko* fund while the rest of the proceeds will be used as prize for the first, second, and third place winners in the tournament.

"That way, you don't have to take money from your existing funds as prize for the winners," said Manglona.

While they plan to solicit from local businesses for prizes or donations, Manglona disclosed that they are not expecting positive feedback since many establishments are barely making any profit due to the economic downturn.

"In this tough economy, it's hard for businesses to stay afloat," said Manglona.

The *man'amko* are also planning to hold an exchange gift among themselves on Dec. 22.

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council chair Teresita Sorroza urged congregates at the center to join the activity not on the basis of the amount of gifts but to be able to share with the other *man'amko*.

"It's about the concept of sharing and having a connection. After all, you only pass this world once," said Sorroza.



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The Commonwealth Cancer Association (CCA) is the community-based cancer support organization for the Northern Mariana Islands dedicated to eliminating cancer and saving lives by providing Advocacy, Awareness, Education, Services and HOPE for all its constituents

CCA is a non-profit organization managed by a 7 member Board of Directors who represents the diversity of the CNMI. CCA's operational funding is fully supported by contributions from corporations, families and individuals.

Position Description: Program Manager

As a Program Manager you will serve as an advocate for the CCA, supporting the CCA's mission and helping the organization better communicate who we are and what we do for the people who need us most. Eligible candidates need qualifications enabling them to fulfill the following key responsibilities:

- Manage budget and comply with stringent guidelines for program services offered to cancer patients and constituents
- Coordinate and collaborate with the Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands CNMI Representative and the CNMI Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan (CCCCP) and effectively collaborate with the Program Manager to advocate and further our mission goals
- Develop, manage and grow revenue goals through multiple, fundraising events and collateral sales
- Assist the Event Chairperson(s) and participate in efficiently carrying out our signature fundraising event the "Marianas March Against Cancer", by attending Organization Committee and Team Captain meetings
- Mobilize and coordinate a CNMI community-wide volunteer working committee to implement the CNMI CCCC
- Develop and cultivate community partnerships/relationships and participate in appropriate coalitions
- Prepare/disseminate reports and publications such as an annual report, weekly performance report, bulletins, brochures, flyers, and various other promotional and educational cancer-related materials
- Assertively promote CCA Advocacy, initiatives, education and services to schools, worksites and community leaders to effectively build broad based support for our mission
- Seek monetary and in-kind donations from our business, community, private/public grants and endowments through direct solicitation, grant application and or bartering of goods and services
- Capture and track constituents served from our projects and services
- Comply and demonstrate ability to work within established budgets
- Effectively arrange monthly board meetings and other work as assigned by the President or his/her designee
- Plan ahead and always anticipate what is wanted and needed and be out in front in seeing that we meet our goals and responsibilities to the community.

Qualifications and Position Requirements:

- AA Degree and/or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Two years experience in sales, event management, customer service or volunteer management
- Demonstrated project management skills with high attention to detail and ability to multi task and delegate
- Demonstrated ability to inspire volunteers
- Strong relationship building skills
- Possess high energy, positive attitude
- Ability to maintain professional demeanor
- Must be a team player who can effectively work and interact with volunteers and the public
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrated presentation skills
- Proficient with Microsoft Office Suite more specifically MS Publisher, Adobe Photoshop or comparable software, database and spreadsheet management, e-mail software and Internet browsers
- Travel to Rota, Tinian, regional and Stateside may be required and will be funded by CCA as Contracting Party
- Evening and weekend work required

Condition of Employment and Remuneration:

- Independent Contract Agreement - At Will, Exempt Contract Employment
- Contract remuneration \$25,000.00 to \$32,000.00 per annum depending on qualifications and experience.
- This position requires that you have a 2010 CNMI Business License
- Please submit cover letter and resume by the deadline of **December 21, 2011 at 5:00PM** to the CCA email at cca@ccamarianas.org, or hand deliver it to the CCA office located in Gualo Rai. Address your cover letter to Bud White, President of CCA, or to Maggie Camacho, Chair of the Selection Committee. For more information, please call our office at 682-0050



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

INVITATION FOR BID NMHC IFB 2011-012

This ad is paid with HUD Funds by NMHC

Ground Maintenance Services for NMHC's Properties in Tinian

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors are hereby giving notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids from interested, licensed companies in the Commonwealth to provide ground maintenance services for its properties in Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Interested firms may pick up Bid Specifications at the NMHC Office in Garapan, Saipan and at its Field Office in San Jose Village, Tinian, beginning Monday, November 21, 2011, from 7:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Field Office located in the Juan King Building in San Jose Village on Friday, December 9, 2011, at 10:30 a.m.. Bidders will have the opportunity to tour the housing subdivision and other properties owned by NMHC to be covered under the proposed contract. Attendance at this conference and site visits are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements, and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder.

Sealed bids must be marked **NMHC-ITB 2011-012**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950, not later than **10:00 a.m., local time December 19, 2011**. Bids received after the date and time will not be accepted. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notice of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m., local time, December 19, 2011**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **December 19, 2011**, and must be received at Procurement and Supply no later than **December 28, 2011**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan at **8:00 a.m., local time, December 29, 2011**. However, if no notice of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m., local time on December 19, 2011**.

NMHC hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contacts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, disabilities or national origin.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC.

The Commonwealth Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in the bids if determined by the government to be in its best interest. All bids shall become the property of the Commonwealth Government.

For information, call the NMHC Office in Tinian at 433-9213 or the Central Office in Garapan Saipan, during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **MARCIE M. TOMOKANE**
Chairwoman of the Board

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, Procurement & Supply

Korean women's group hands out gifts to *man'amko*



Members of the Korean Women's Association of Saipan pose for a group photo with congregates at the Aging Center yesterday morning. Seven members of the nonprofit group distributed gift bags containing shirts, shampoo and conditioner, and choco pies to the *man'amko*.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seven members of the Korean Women's Association of Saipan, a nonprofit group, yesterday brought the Christmas spirit to life at the Aging Center by handing out gift bags to the island's elderly.

The group, led by president Keum Joo Lee, gave away gift bags that contained shirts, shampoo and conditioner, and choco pies for the *man'amko*.

Lee said their group, which currently has 15 members, visits the Aging Center every Christmas to give them gifts.

"I am very thankful for being able to see your beautiful smile last year and today. We have put all our effort to prepare a gift for all of you and I hope that you will like it," Lee told some 50 congregates at the center.

Lee added: "I hope that you will always be happy and healthy. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council chair Teresita Sorroza thanked the Korean Women's Association of Saipan on behalf

of all the congregates. Sorroza disclosed that besides Christmas time, the group used to come to the center every two months to give them free haircut.

"For remembering us with their whole heart, we say, *kam-sahamnida* or thank you in their language. You haven't forgotten us and we appreciate that," Sorroza said.

Aging Office director Rose Mondala said that businesses and organizations are finding it difficult to give gifts to the *man'amko* because of the economic crisis.

"Even though the economy is bad, the Korean Women's Association came up with something for all of you and we want to thank them for that," she said. "We're going to expect that from a lot of businesses here. Even though they don't have enough, we're going to appreciate whatever they can give us."

Last Wednesday, the Matua Riders also visited the *man'amko* and handed out gift bags containing healthy treats, provided them with live music and entertainment, and made a \$500 donation.



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE

(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds.)

Governor Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman, Ms. Marcie A. Tomokane, wish to announce that its Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) for Program Year 2010 is available for review. Comments made by the general public should be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 29, 2011. Written comments must be submitted to the NMHC Office in Garapan, Saipan, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or by contacting Ms. Jeannie P. Mafnas, Planner/Grant Writer, at 234-9447/7689.

The report will be submitted to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Honolulu Office, by December 31, 2011. The CAPER encompasses the performance assessment of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Act (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Programs, Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), the Community Development Block Grant-Recovery (ARRA-funded), and the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (ARRA-funded) in the Commonwealth.

The report is available at the NMHC Central Office in Saipan and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Rota and Tinian during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

Marcie A. Tomokane
Chairman of the Board

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

Holiday Season Impaired Driving Month

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Campaign

November 27, 2011 through January 3, 2012

**BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING AND FRIENDS
DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK.**

**BAM! YOUR
LIFE JUST
CHANGED.**



**Have a Safe
Holiday Season!**

Drive drunk and you will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.



Lecture on ancient history this Saturday

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council cordially invites the public to a lecture on ancient history by two visiting archaeologists to be held at Northern Marianas College, Room D-1, this Saturday, Dec. 17, starting at 6pm.

In their lecture titled "Early Settlement in the Mariana Islands: The Latest Evidence from Tinian," Dr. Hsiao-chun Hung and Mike Carson will discuss the preliminary results of their recently completed research project near the famous

"House of Taga" Latte site.

This project, which involved hand-excavating two deep pits, recovered important clues from the past, including early pottery shards, stone and shell tools and ornaments, environmental information, and materials for radiocarbon dating.

Current archaeological research suggests that the Mariana Islands were first settled roughly 3,500 years ago.

During their presentation, Hung and Carson will sum-

marize the goals of their work, present an initial overview of their findings, and compare their Tinian data with information from other archaeological sites in the region.

By doing so, Hung and Carson will help to place the Mariana Islands within the broader framework of human settlement of the Pacific region, an exploit that one historian has termed "an incredible maritime adventure."

Hung and Carson are on the faculty of the Australian Na-

tional University in Canberra, Australia. Both have undertaken previous archaeological research in the Marianas as well as at other locations in Asia and the Pacific.

This presentation is a part of the Council's ongoing Community Lecture series, which provides the public with information on a wide range of humanities topics by local, regional, and international scholars.

For more information, contact Council staff at 235-4785. (PR)

USCIS UPDATE

Parole for immediate relatives of US citizens

On Nov. 23, 2011, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services notified the CNMI public that certain immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless" individuals in the CNMI would be eligible to apply for a grant of parole. USCIS asked that people covered by the announcement not apply until further details were announced. USCIS has now issued guidance to provide those further details.

On a case-by-case basis, USCIS will consider an application for parole for the immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless" individuals. A grant of parole will allow immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and stateless individuals to lawfully remain in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. USCIS has exercised discretionary parole authority on a case-by-case basis in the CNMI since 2009 for special situations to assist with the transition to U.S. immigration law.

Q. Who is eligible to apply for this parole?

A. You may apply for this type of parole if you are:

1. An immediate relative of a U.S. citizen. An immediate relative for purposes of this exercise of parole authority is an individual who:

■ Is a legal spouse, an unmarried child under 21 years old, or a parent (regardless of the age of the U.S. citizen child) at the time of adjudication, AND

■ Who was legally present in and residing in the CNMI as of Nov. 27, 2011.

2. A foreign national born in what is now the CNMI between Jan. 1, 1974 and Jan. 9, 1978. These individuals are sometimes referred to as "stateless" because of their unique situation under the Covenant Act establishing eligibility for U.S. citizenship of individuals born in the CNMI.

3. A child (unmarried under

21 years old) or legal spouse of a foreign national who was born in what is now the CNMI between Jan. 1, 1974 and Jan. 9, 1978 (also referred to as a "stateless" individual).

A widow or widower of a U.S. citizen is eligible to apply for this exercise of parole authority as long as:

■ The death of the U.S. citizen spouse occurred less than two years before the date of submitting the application for parole, and

■ The widow or widower has not remarried.

Q. Should a U.S. citizen born in the CNMI between Jan. 1, 1974 and Jan. 9, 1978 apply for this parole?

A. No. Parole is only for individuals born in the CNMI between the qualifying dates who do not have U.S. citizenship. If you are a U.S. citizen, you do not need parole and should not apply for it. Please see Parole for Immediate Relatives of U.S. Citizens and Certain Stateless Individuals on the USCIS web site for more details on who qualifies to apply for this parole.

Q. Who can file an application?

A. The immediate relative who is seeking a grant of parole must apply to USCIS. The U.S. citizen may file the application if the immediate relative seeking parole is a child under 18 years old.

Q. Do I need to apply again if I already applied in November 2011?

A. No. If you already applied for parole in November 2011, you do not need to apply again. You will be notified if USCIS requires any additional documentation or an in-person interview.

Q. What is the filing fee to apply for parole?

A. There is no filing fee to apply for parole. If you are granted

parole and would like to work, there is a filing fee of \$380 to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). For information about filing procedures and fees for obtaining an EAD after you have been granted parole, go to the Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization web page.

Q. What must I include in the parole request package?

A. Please see Parole for Immediate Relatives of U.S. Citizens and Certain Stateless Individuals on the USCIS website for details on what to include in the request, as there are some differences between what is needed from Immediate Relatives of U.S. citizens and "Stateless" Individuals. It is important to use an accurate P.O. Box mailing address and valid contact telephone number in your package.

Q. When should I apply for this parole?

A. There is no deadline for applying for this type of parole; however, USCIS strongly recommends that you apply on or before Jan. 31, 2012. See more details in the parole guidelines on the USCIS website.

Q. Where can I apply for this parole?

A. Please see the table below for instructions on where to submit your parole request.

If you are on Saipan	If you are on Rota or Tinian
You may drop off your request at the Application Support Center at the TSL Plaza in Garapan or you may mail your request to: DHS-USCIS Sirena Plaza, Suite 100 108 Hernan Cortez Avenue Hagatna, Guam 96910 ATTN: IMMEDIATE RELATIVE PAROLE - CNMI	You may drop off your request at the Application Support Center at the TSL Plaza in Garapan or you may mail your request to: DHS-USCIS Sirena Plaza, Suite 100 108 Hernan Cortez Avenue Hagatna, Guam 96910 ATTN: IMMEDIATE RELATIVE PAROLE - CNMI

Q. For how long will parole be valid?

A. If USCIS determines that you are eligible for parole, we will grant parole for an appropri-

ate period of time, not to extend beyond Dec. 31, 2012. USCIS will make a decision about possible extensions at a later date.

Q. Can I work if I get parole?

A. A grant of parole will provide continuing lawful presence after Nov. 27, 2011, until the parole validity period expires or parole is revoked. A grant of parole does not authorize employment but will allow you to apply for work authorization. You can do this by submitting a Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.

Q. Can I travel with parole?

A. This parole does not authorize travel to any other part of the United States. Parole will be automatically terminated if you leave the CNMI. If you need to travel, you will have to contact USCIS.

Q. Is this the same as applying for Lawful Permanent Residence?

A. Applying for parole is separate from applying for lawful permanent residence (green card). U.S. citizens who are interested in sponsoring a relative for lawful permanent residence will need to file a Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative, if and when they are eligible to do so.

This Form I-130 application only establishes the relationship between a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident and his or her alien relative. To obtain a green card through adjustment of status in the CNMI, you would need to submit the entire package, including the Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status.

Please see Parole for Immediate Relatives of U.S. Citizens and Certain Stateless Individuals on the USCIS website for detailed guidelines on this parole. (USCIS)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Dec. 14, 1999

Retirement bill spares present govt employees

Present government employees will not be affected by the proposed elimination of the 30 percent retirement bonus, but only those who will be hired after the scheduled abolition by tomorrow, lawmakers assured yesterday. Senate Floor Leader Pete P. Reyes said the Legislature has put in place measures to guarantee that employees currently working for the government will not be denied from receiving such benefits even after the governor signs it into law. "Those that are now entitled to it under the original law will not be affected in any way with the passage of this act," he said in an interview.

Volunteer group eyed to protect Managaha

The Division of Environmental Quality has proposed creation of a community-based volunteer group to help government authorities enforce regulations of the planned marine conservation area in Managaha and surrounding waters. DEQ Director Ignacio V. Cabrera said this assistance from grassroots level will lead to the success of the project for the protection of the island's fish and wildlife as well as other marine resources. "If this important step of the process is not done with the participation and support of the community, it is not likely to succeed," he said in his testimony presented to the House Natural Resources Committee.

Dec. 14, 2001

Agencies rush to address dust emission

The Army Corps of Engineers admitted yesterday that, although the average dust emission by the indirect thermal desorption machine used in treating some 20,000 tons of PCB-laced soil is below harmful, it far-exceeded the limit occasionally. This, as both the Division of Environmental Quality and the US Environmental Protection Agency focus their attention on the emissions by the ITD unit. Frank Ono, the Corps' representative on-island, said its contractor, Environmental Chemical Corp., is addressing the dust problem after a meeting with Tanapag residents Wednesday.

DOF failed to reimburse over \$18M in US grants

The Department of Finance has failed to reimburse at least \$18 million from various federal grantees since 2000, an amount, if collected, would help alleviate the current economic condition of the Commonwealth. Rep. William S. Torres said he will meet with finance officials to discuss the alleged failure of the department to draw down \$10 million in federal money in 2001 and another \$8 million in 2000. Torres hinted, however, that the amount could be more than \$18 million considering that the finance department has not been conducting a regular reimbursement process.

Dec. 14, 2002

Utilities damage partially set at \$117K

A preliminary assessment of damage to utility systems on Saipan and Tinian has been partially estimated at \$117,000, with the figure expected to go higher in the coming days with the assessment's completion and the inclusion of the damage to utilities on Rota. This was learned in a statement released by the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., which disclosed that over the course of super typhoon Pongsona through Tuesday, December 10, the Power Division responded to 285 customer calls on typhoon damage. CUC said the damage to the Saipan power system included several downed utility poles, and some poles that were leaning that had to be replaced or repositioned. Power lines were down in locations throughout the island where fallen trees and branches interrupted service.

Babauta signs 3 bills into law

Gov. Juan N. Babauta interrupted a regular session of the House of Representatives yesterday to sign into law three bills that raise the taxes on cigarettes and alcoholic drinks, make the CNMI eligible to receive its share of the tobacco settlement funds, and enact language that paves the way for the settlement of \$40 million in land compensation claims. Despite diverse lines of attack, Babauta said all three measures have one thing in common—the ultimate goal of jumpstarting the moribund economy with the injection of both local and federal dollars into government coffers and private pockets. "I am pleased to be signing [these] three important pieces of legislation that will contribute to the financial health of the Commonwealth, protect the physical health of us all, and put money into the pockets of people long owed compensation," said Babauta, just before setting his signature on the three bills.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MHS mid-progress report

To all parents and legal guardians of Marianas High School: MHS will be distributing its 2nd quarter mid-progress report on Thursday, Dec. 15, from 4pm to 6pm. Students will be released at 1pm. (PR)

SVES PTA meeting

San Vicente Elementary School

will have a PTA meeting on Dec. 23, starting at 1pm after the cultural heritage ceremony at the school cafeteria. Agenda includes system accreditation and Juvenile Justice Act. For more information, call the main office at 237-3791. (PR)

Military training on FDM, northern half of ATCAA

SANTA RITA, Guam—The

U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla and in the northern half of air traffic control assigned airspace 3A, 3B and 3C on the following dates and times:

■ Dec. 14, from 2pm to 8pm
■ Dec. 15, from 2pm to 8pm

The public—especially fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised

to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. ATCAA 3A, 3B, 3C is an irregular shaped polygon that begins north of Sarigan and extends south-southeast in international waters. (PR)

Island Snapshots



WATER PROJECT

Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta, second from right, and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, third from right, are joined by Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, third from left, and representatives from the Water Task Force, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Capital Improvement Project Office, and project contractor AIC Marianas during Monday afternoon's ribbon cutting for the Agag well fields isolation and water system improvement project that the Interior funded with an award of some \$826,000.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 4th birthday to our very own Purple Mermaid Lady Gaga, Trincia Ja'ne "TJ/Boom" Reyes Lizama! Hope you have an amazing and fun-filled day, with many more birthdays to come. Thinking of you on your special day: Jayboy, Baby Joe, Tricia, Kirida, Keoni, LRock, Louie, Luther, and your Onio/Pinalak family.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CLARISSA V. DAVID

NEW POSTAL OFFICE

Fr. Rey D. Rosal, left, leads the blessing of the newly opened Dandan Postal Services last Saturday. The grand opening featured a ribbon cutting ceremony led by Dandan Postal Services owner Joe Ayuyu, who is also the owner and president of McDonald's Saipan, and his wife Marcia Ayuyu.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Guests chat inside the Dandan Postal Services following the ribbon cutting ceremony last Saturday.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Kagman High School JROTC battalion commander Keisha Manglona, second left, poses with some of the congregates at the Aging Center on Monday.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

A member of the Kagman High School JROTC unit smiles as she interacts with a senior citizen after their Christmas show at the Aging Center last Dec. 12.



Above, Aging Center congregante Mila Garin, left, greets a Kagman High School student "Merry Christmas" on Monday.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



Far left, Kagman High School students sing Christmas carols for the *man'amko* at the Aging Center on Dec. 12.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



Left, members of the Kagman High School JROTC unit march from the Sugar King Park to the Aging Center on Monday to perform for the *man'amko*.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXI, Issue No. 296Published daily at 2/F JP Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

Ignoring a global warning

Nero probably didn't really fiddle while Rome burned; for one thing, fiddles as we know them today didn't exist yet, and for another, historians at the time dismissed the story as a rumor. Moreover, it's hard to believe that even a tyrant as petty and murderous as Nero would be foolish enough to watch the burning of his city-state and do nothing about it. But we Americans are.

Climate change is no longer a theoretical concept to be debated at symposiums by science nerds. It is happening right here, right now. Thirteen of the warmest years on record worldwide have happened in the past 15 years. In the United States, 12 weather-related disasters this year have caused in excess of \$1 billion in damage each, a record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Although many expected the global economic downturn to slow the output of greenhouse gases, emissions actually have been accelerating at an alarming rate, growing 5.9 percent in 2010—the biggest jump since 2003. The American response? Fiddling around.

The 17th annual U.N. climate conference, which aims at coming up with a successor to the Kyoto Protocol or a new international agreement, wrapped up Friday in Durban, South Africa. You can be forgiven for not knowing about this, because U.S. media have largely ignored it. And not just the media. In 2009, when Democrats controlled the House and there was still some hope of passing a climate bill, more than 20 members of Congress attended the conference in Copenhagen. This year, not a single one showed up.

The U.S. position at the talks can be described as, well, nuanced. Chief climate negotiator Todd Stern says that he favors a legally binding treaty to replace Kyoto (which the U.S. Senate never ratified), but only if it holds developing nations such as China and India to the same mandatory standards as industrialized countries such as the United States. Yet he acknowledges that those nations will never go along with such a deal, so countries should just make voluntary pledges to cut emissions and hold themselves accountable. In other words: "I will now perform Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D Major. Does anybody else smell smoke?"

The voluntary approach isn't getting us far. At last year's climate conference in Cancun, the world agreed to limit the rise in global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius higher than the pre-industrial norm. Yet that goal can't be met under the current global pledges of voluntary reductions, leading to predictions of up to 4 degrees of warming by the end of the century. That would mean catastrophic sea-level rise, drought, famine and weather-related carnage. Fortunately, we'll all be dead by then. But our progeny will not thank us.

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NEWT'S BAGGAGE: TOO MUCH OF ONE AND NOT ENOUGH OF THE OTHER



2PSCom? No. 6

So far we've learned what the process will be, how the Second Political and Economic Status Commission will be organized, what its responsibilities are, how transparency will be maintained and how much it will cost. We learned what form the final reports and recommendations will take and how those recommendations will be voted on by the citizens.

This week we'll look back at the circumstances that led to the first agreement between the U.S. and the Northern Marianas, the "Covenant." As we see what the motivations of the U.S. were during the original negotiations we can see what has changed and we will have a better idea whether continuing the "commonwealth" status with the U.S. is still in the best interest of the Northern Marianas people or if there are any other forms of political status that would better enable the NMI people's aspirations to full and meaningful self-government.

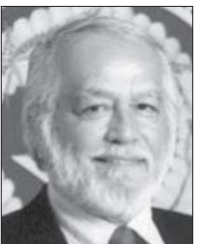
World War II essentially destroyed Saipan and the thriving, agricultural-based Japanese economy here and on Tinian. After World War II the U.S. Navy ruled the Northern Marianas, except Rota, for many years and in the '60s the Trust Territory was transitioning and political rule was shifting to the Interior Department of the U.S. government. In both cases, economic development on Saipan, Tinian and Rota was purposely stifled to suit the purposes of the U.S. and its military. The Northern Marianas was an economic wasteland by then with little or no opportunity for the prosperity once enjoyed by the Japanese of these islands. By the 1970s, with the U.N. and other U.N. member nations calling for an end to colonialism by powerful countries, the people of the Northern Marianas and the U.S. government were both looking at new ways to structure the relationship between them.

The Vietnam War was just ending and the U.S. saw unstable conditions in Asia, making it in the best interest of the U.S. military to maintain a presence here or at very least to keep any other strategic power from gaining a position here. It was in this light that the Covenant was negotiated. The view of the U.S. at the time was that "Micronesians" were unable to govern themselves and they conducted behind-the-scenes discussions and made numerous comments that were quite condescending toward islanders and their intellectual abilities. Once these documents were revealed through Freedom of Information disclosures many years later, it became obvious what some of the U.S. motivations in drafting the Covenant really were and that U.S. interest alone was at the heart of that agreement.

If you would like to see what these deprecating documents reveal, I refer you to a series of National Security Action Memorandums originating in the U.S. Kennedy White House; or the minutes of various closed meetings held to form a Task Force to change Micronesian regional policy; a series of written policy decisions outlining an "open drive to win the plebiscite" that would be called for; discussions of whether to employ "hard-sell or soft-sell" tactics to win

By **STANLEY T. MCGINNIS TORRES**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rep. Stanley T. McGinnis Torres is a member of the 17th Legislature.



the election; discussions allowing only "sanitized" versions of NMI economic reports to be released to the public; orders that none of the political motivational sections of the report ever be released at all; discussions about how to successfully time the coming elections for best possible chance of a U.S. win; and the text of the official statement of the then Secretary of the Interior regarding strengthening their control over the region and the mounting of an open campaign to get the Micronesians to vote for affiliation with the U.S. These are lengthy documents and I offer you the opportunity to view them at my office on Capital Hill or I can send you a copy.

A major tactic to get enough of the general population to vote "for" the Covenant was to hire a series of propagandists/U.S. friendly "journalists" to keep a steady stream of pro-U.S. information presented to the potential voters. A couple of those information "spinners" still call these islands home or at least keep up the barrage of written, pro-U.S. commentary these several decades later. Over time they were successful so that in the '70s when the vote was held, a majority (about 78 percent or some 3,000-plus) of voters chose U.S. affiliation through the "Covenant."

Fast-forward to 1990 and the U.N. dissolves the Trust Territory but the Covenant, only 14 years old by then, was already starting to show federal interference on self-governing and problems regarding immigration, labor, and other local issues. By the 2000s, the Marine Monument and the 200-mile economic zone were unilaterally taken by the U.S. without recourse or even a vote of the local people. These and other self-government issues have spurred the formation of the 2nd Political and Economic Status Commission.

The long and short of it is that times have changed, conditions have changed and it is time we took another look at the Covenant and the system of rule it imposes to see if there are other ways to structure our economy and our political connections to the rest of the world that work better for us, the citizens of the Northern Marianas. Maybe so, maybe not.

Next week we'll have a short review of the commission and its mandated responsibilities and look at just when this process will get started. Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments about this week's article at 664-8903 or rep.torress@cnmille.gov.mp.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

As investors talk of leaving

At a cocktail/dinner reception, there was the usual cross section of public and biz luminaries exchanging felicitations and views. It included the mundane like the cooler than normal tropical weather to blizzards in the northeast and earthquakes in Japan, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

I stood at a corner sizing up key players whose businesses have served collectively as the engine of the local economy. A quiet echo kept repeating a message, “the economy sputtering to death.” I quietly wondered what must have been going through their minds as their investments consistently contract. Specifically, how much longer could they take major losses before they head out the jetways?

If the CNMI is no longer a profitable investment venue, would the balance of investors stick around a bit longer or would they deploy to nearby Asian countries where other key investors are flocking? The exit of Japan and Continental Airlines sucked out the wind of the local tourism industry big time. Nothing was ever the same since then. It sent a signal that the islands’ flavor for investment was saturated, similar to desert land during a prolonged drought season.

Over the next hour, I heard deep sighs of planned business closures and relocation, though not sure of the timeline. But there’s a definite move to deploy elsewhere. I could picture a business “killing fields” as the place turns into ghost towns of sort. The net effect of more business closures would be devastating. Manufacturing is history! Investment confidence is also history!

What’s left and how do we deal with the impending bankruptcy never before seen in our developmental history? What would it take to recalibrate rebuilding burned bridges with the feds and major investors from Japan and nearby Asian countries? Even a quick glance across the Pacific Divide shows that federal funds are dwindling and all state governments have cut expenditures, given the snail-like progress on economic recovery.

Medicaid assistance has ended for all states that put heavy fiscal pressure on state governments. Although the federal government is

required to pick up the costs for people newly eligible for the program, many who are now eligible but not enrolled are expected to be drawn-in and states must shoulder part of those costs. More fiscal pressure is ahead for the CNMI as it navigates huge decreases in its revenue source while colliding with far less help from the feds that is mandated to cut national deficit now at \$15 trillion.

During dinner, a friend from a nearby country said his government and ours are the same, “Do nothing!” I kidded him that doing nothing is itself a concept of work Chamorro and Bwibwi style. (Laughter). Definitely, the future looks woefully bleak, according to prisms of businessmen here struggling to stay afloat.

■ ■ ■ ■

Working with what we had

Though I rely on a powerful dosage of hope to move about every break of dawn, the bad tidings you hear in the community sometime dims it to near total darkness. I would pull out of it saying it isn’t the end of the world. Must endure blinding darkness before welcoming brighter tomorrows.

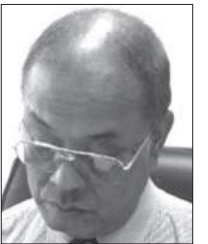
Gratifying though seeing families meet more often than usual. The matriarch or patriarch, parents or oldest sibling makes it a point to engage in familial discussions with individual family members before day’s end. It is here where he or she learns who needs help most muddling through these lean times. Call it communal obligation. The rest would pitch in generously.

It makes the moral duty of the oldest in the family a difficult challenge. Even if he or she were down to her last \$10 with planned expenditure, more often than not he’d martyr himself to help siblings most in need. No worries! It is happening now in almost every island clan. And the giving to the needy is more satisfying and valuable a trophy than anything else in our lifetime.

Yes, I’d share what little I have with siblings, children, and grandchildren. There’s no greater satisfaction than the spiritual thought and value system of helping your fellow man. I’d gladly give for I know the pain of families suffering from abject poverty and destitution. I’ve lived it! Therefore, I know every inch

By **JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Delrosario is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune’s Opinion Section.



of that road as a young kid more than 50 years ago.

■ ■ ■ ■

Through the years, I’ve spent time with friends at their houses in nearby villages. I mull the similar conditions our families face daily. I’d join them on a trip to the farm as they feed the farm animals and gather harvests to take home at dusk. They also collect firewood for mom’s old stove. It was humbling what they go through daily, things that we also do at the farm when we head there after school.

The more physically fit would go coconut crab hunting at night and return before the wee hours of the morning with 100-lb sacks loaded with delicacies. Either that or head out to the beach at sunset and help master fishermen pull fishnets. It was a simple life far removed from the demands of a modern Northern Marianas community where you even have to have a master insurance for all insurance contracts.

We once forgave as good Christians. Today we settle differences—from family land distribution to auto-accidents—in a court of law. We have become a mercilessly litigious community. Problem solving among community members was never like this before. Is it the macho attitude that we relish and not the harmony we need to nurture for life after infractions? Harmony, the old-fashioned way must have slowly receded with the tide of “in your face” change.

Letter to the Editor

OTOMS brief: Part 2

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.—Martin Luther King, Jr.

The condition in the CW Final Rule that an employer must attest the unavailability of a qualified U.S. worker to petition a foreign worker or to cancel an approved contract between an employer and employee in view of an available U.S. worker is discriminatory and violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Guidelines on Discrimination Because of National Origin, 29 CFR 1606, which prohibits discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

What CNMI employers did was advertise jobs that are currently occupied by foreign workers in view of available U.S. workers. Poor foreign workers were terminated right at the end date of umbrella permit expiration without prior notice because a U.S. citizen emerged from behind, giving no chance of looking for another employer before the closing date of Nov. 28, 2011. The poor foreign workers were now accumulating days of being out of status due to CW adverse rule. Is it the intent of Public Law 110-229? With what is going on, the fate and destiny of all foreign workers on the islands under CW Rule are at the mercy of their employers. Sad to say, foreign workers who dedicated themselves to their jobs for a decade vanished in just an hour, in a minute, or so.

“The purpose of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment is to secure every person within the State’s jurisdiction against intentional and arbitrary discrimination, whether occasioned by express terms of a statute or by its improper execution through duly constituted agents. *Willowbrook v. Olech*, 528 U.S. 1073 (2000), 120 S. Ct. 1073, 1074-75 (2000) (per curiam) (quoting *Sioux City Bridge Co. v. Dakota County*, 260 U.S. 441,445 (1923)).”

The requirement under the CW Final Rule to consider the availability of qualified U.S. workers before filing petitions for foreign workers violates the equal protection clause. Suspect classifications

such as those based on national origin are subject to the strict scrutiny test, which is deemed applicable in this case.

The lack of action or inaction by DHS, DOL, and other agencies in charge of the transition period with respect to clarifying and clearing up the existing confusion regarding immigration status of foreign workers with pending claims, unresolved cases, unpaid awarded monetary claims and those granted conditional umbrella permits by the CNMI Attorney General’s Office violates due process as workers are given no alternative or protection to resolve their claims or cases.

The rationale for limiting or restricting travel for CW workers does not provide a compelling state interest as respondents failed to provide the basis or evidence regarding violations by foreign workers. Foreign workers under the CW rule are limited to CNMI only travel and travel abroad is also unduly restricted by the mandatory requirement of obtaining a CW visa at the embassy or consulate where a foreign worker is located abroad before entering or being admitted to the CNMI. The prevailing requirement for travel as practiced using separate parole procedures, i.e. advance parole or parole, should be continued in the transition period instead of the CW visa requirement since the CW grants immigration status limited only to the CNMI.

The CW rule violates Regulatory Flexibility Act as its final regulatory flexibility analysis does not contain a description of the projected reporting, recordkeeping and other compliance requirements of the rule. The final rule does not prescribe a schedule for allocating CW status throughout the transition period as required by the CNRA. The Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis done by the agencies charged under the CW rule has been haphazard and is not based on current economic data. The agencies charged under the CNRA for an orderly transition of federal immigration laws has the full burden to comply, given that their rulemaking authority affects existing rights, the CNMI economy or in a large scale, the lives of the people inhabiting the CNMI.

Petitioners in this case seek to inhibit the respondents from implementing the CW Final Rule in view of the foregoing violations of due process, equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution and other laws. A party seeking the entry of a preliminary injunction carries the burden of persuasion and must demonstrate: (1) a likelihood of irreparable harm and the unavailability of an adequate remedy at law; Irreparable harm such as: A professional foreign workers being processed with CW1 petition instead of

H1 visa, a technical foreign workers being processed with CW1 instead of H2 visa. Who are those professional foreign workers? Teachers, engineers, accountants, nurses, and other foreign professionals who are currently holding managerial position were petitioned with CW1, those are irreparable harm; (2) a substantial likelihood of success is denied because Commonwealth-only worker, or CW, status do not meet the eligibility criteria for a U.S. H-1 status and therefore, can no longer file for adjustment of status after three years; (3) that the threatened injury to the petitioner outweighs possible harm to the respondent; and (4) that the granting of a temporary injunction will not disserve the public interest.

Foreign workers will bear irreparable harm if the CW Final Rule is imposed given the very brief time frame set for compliance and given the poor state of the economy in the CNMI. Irreparable harm will result to foreign workers who will be adjudged out-of-status after the expiration of their CNMI umbrella permits. Petitioners and those similarly situated will bear irreparable harm if the implementation of the CW Final Rule without regard for the provisions violating due process, equal protection clause and other laws, is carried out. Irreparable harm will result if the CW Final Rule is carried out without regard for those adversely affected by the cited provisions, violating the U.S. Constitution and other laws. The CW Final Rule provides no remedy for redress that may be considered fair and equitable.

A preliminary injunction should be immediately issued to stay the implementation of the CW Rule pending full determination of the merits of this petition and until provisions violating the U.S. Constitution and other laws are duly amended, modified and improved.

“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals”—Martin Luther King, Jr.






Carlito J. Marquez
Gerardo de Guzman
Hector Sevilla
Bonifacio Sagan
Eduardo Elenzano
Manuel Vilaga
Lee, Jong Ho

October Twenty One Movement, Saipan (OTOMS)

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy at times. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy at times. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▼ 76
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 76
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 76
Majuro	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 78

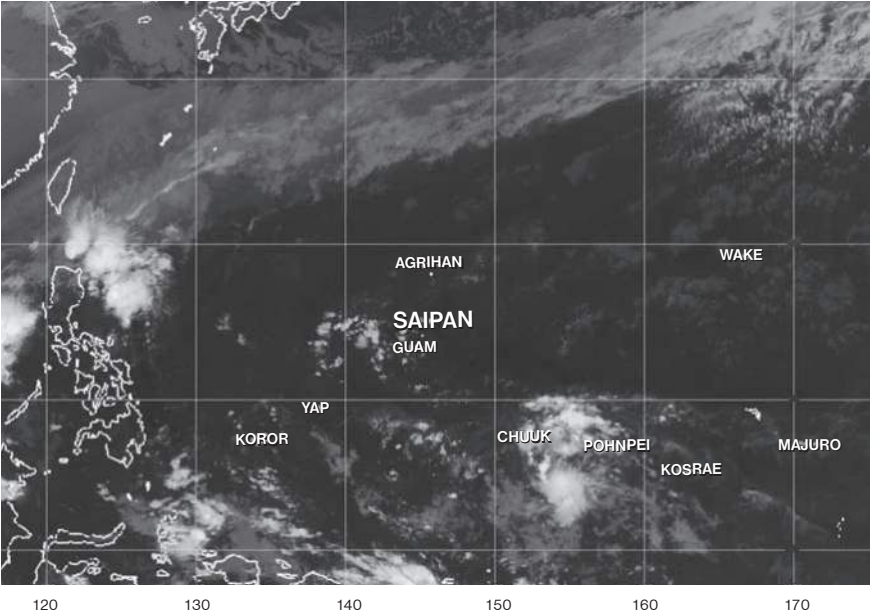
Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲ 69 ▼ 65
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 32 ▼ 15
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲ 68 ▼ 59
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 81 ▼ 71
London	Showers	▲ 45 ▼ 39
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 61 ▼ 39
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲ 87 ▼ 76
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲ 76 ▼ 51
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲ 79 ▼ 69
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲ 47 ▼ 39
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲ 54 ▼ 44
Paris	Rain	▲ 50 ▼ 44
Pusan	Cloudy	▲ 45 ▼ 41
Rome	Showers	▲ 63 ▼ 46
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 43 ▼ 39
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲ 57 ▼ 45
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲ 31 ▼ 21
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲ 57 ▼ 43
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲ 51 ▼ 34

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
3:50 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
11:00 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
4:37 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
9:07 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A stationary front extends from 25N140E to beyond 130E at 21N. Extensive cloud cover and scattered showers are found along and up to 400 miles northwest of this boundary. A developing tropical disturbance is centered west of Chuuk near 5N147E and is the subject of a tropical cyclone formation alert from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring south of Guam and west of Chuuk between 3N and 10N from 141E to 151E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers from Kosrae eastward into the Marshall Islands within 100 miles of a line from 5N158E to 4N162E to 4N165E to 6N166E to 3N171E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Thursday	6:35 AM	5:49 PM
Friday	6:35 AM	5:49 PM
Saturday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Sunday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	9:05 PM	9:14 AM
Thursday	9:59 PM	9:58 AM
Friday	10:53 PM	10:41 AM
Saturday	11:47 PM	11:24 AM
Sunday		12:06 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- **ISLAND SNAPSHOTS**
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- **BUSINESS**
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- **SAMUT SARI**
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- **TRAVELOGUE**
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- **CAMPUS BULLETIN**
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5	C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5	C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05070	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP	C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily	C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6	C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6	C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:00am	8:35am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:20pm	Daily	DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6	3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ704/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT	C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM	C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau	C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN	C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM				
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	1, 2, 4, 6 via ICN
C05076/179	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana				ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)			

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Saipan-Rota	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

Study: Gingrich tax plan would worsen deficit

WASHINGTON (AP)—The tax plan by GOP presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich would provide big tax breaks to the rich and blow a huge hole in the federal budget deficit, according to an independent study released Monday.

The analysis by the Tax Policy Center says households making more than \$1 million a year would see their taxes drop by an average of 62 percent. Overall, federal tax revenues would drop by an estimated \$850 billion in 2015, a figure that would dramatically worsen the budget deficit unless it is offset by unprecedented spending cuts, the study said.

"The revenue losses are enormous," said Roberton Williams, a senior fellow at the Tax Policy Center.

Gingrich proposes an optional 15 percent flat tax on income. Under the plan, taxpayers could stay in the current system, which has a top tax rate of 35 percent on taxable income above \$379,150, or switch to the new 15 percent tax. The new tax would apply to income at all levels, but there

A look at Newt Gingrich's tax plan

An independent analysis of Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich's tax plan shows how it would effect different income groups:

Income group In 2011 dollars	Average federal tax change Under the Perry proposal, in dollars
Less than \$10,000	-\$222
10,000-20,000	-247
20,000-30,000	-488
30,000-40,000	-751
40,000-50,000	-985
50,000-75,000	-1,847
75,000-100,000	-3,050
100,000-200,000	-5,799
200,000-500,000	-20,745
500,000-1 million	-76,995
More than 1 million	-613,689

Source: Tax Policy Center

Graphic: Judy Treible, Robert Dorrell

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would be a variety of tax deductions and credits.

Gingrich would eliminate taxes on capital gains, dividends and interest, and reduce the cor-

porate income tax rate from 35 percent to 12.5 percent. The plan would provide a personal deduction of \$12,000 for every American, while maintaining the

\$1,000 per-child tax credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit, which benefits low-income people. Deductions for mortgage interest and charitable donations

would also be maintained.

Gingrich campaign spokesman R.C. Hammond disputed the projections on the budget deficit, saying the study doesn't account for the economic and job growth that such a tax system would generate.

The campaign's website says a new flat tax would make it easy for families to file their returns while eliminating taxes that discourage investment.

"An optional flat tax reform will be simple: Tax returns can be done on one sheet of paper," the website says. "Subtract from income a standard deduction and deductions for charity and home ownership, multiply the result by the fixed, single rate of taxation of at most 15 percent, and the process is over." The analysis comes as the former House speaker has surged to the top of the polls in the race for the Republican nomination for president. Several other candidates have offered variations of the flat tax, including Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Gingrich's

chief rival, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, has proposed changes to the tax system that are less sweeping.

Gingrich's plan, however, would make it even more difficult for Congress to reduce the federal budget deficit, which was \$1.3 trillion in the budget year that ended in September, according to the study. The issue consumed Capitol Hill for several months in the summer and fall, leading to a deficit reduction plan that both Democrats and Republicans dislike.

No one would get a tax increase under Gingrich's plan because households could stay in the current system or switch to the new one, Williams said. Many lower- and middle-income families would probably stay in the current system because they would save money compared to Gingrich's flat tax, he said.

But for the wealthy, lowering the top tax rate and eliminating taxes on investments would provide a huge windfall, according to the study.

\$1T-plus spending bill taking shape in Congress

WASHINGTON (AP)—Weary after a year of partisan bickering, lawmakers tried Monday to wrap up a sprawling \$1 trillion-plus spending bill that chips away at military and environmental spending but denies conservatives many of the policy changes they wanted on social issues, government regulations and health care.

The measure implements this summer's hard-fought budget pact between President Barack Obama and Republican leaders. That deal essentially freezes agency budgets, on average, at levels for the recently-completed budget year that were approved back in April.

Drafted behind closed doors,

the proposed bill would pay for the war in Afghanistan but give the Pentagon just a 1 percent boost in annual spending, while the Environmental Protection Agency's budget would be cut by 3.5 percent.

The bill also covers everything from money to combat AIDS and famine in Africa, patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border, operations of national parks, and budget increases for veterans' health care.

A spokeswoman for House Appropriations Committee Chairman Harold Rogers, R-Ky., said that bargainers had struck an agreement but would not formally unveil it until Tuesday. A House vote is expected Thurs-

day and the Senate is likely to follow in time to meet a mid-night Friday deadline before a stopgap funding measure expires.

The generally smooth, businesslike negotiations on the omnibus spending bill contrasts with the ongoing partisan brawl over Obama's demand that Congress extend jobless benefits and a cut in the Social Security payroll tax. The House is slated to vote on a GOP-friendly version of the payroll tax cut Tuesday; negotiations with the Democratic-controlled Senate on a compromise measure have yet to begin.

The spending measure, meanwhile, is likely to go over like a lead balloon among tea party

conservatives, many of whom believe the August budget and debt compromise didn't cut enough. Last month, 101 House Republicans opposed a smaller bundle of spending bills.

Conservative ire is likely to be magnified once the negotiating outcome regarding dozens of GOP policy "riders" is finalized. Republicans larded the measures with provisions aimed at rolling back Environmental Protection Agency rules, such as regulations on coal ash, large-scale discharges of hot water and greenhouse gases from electric power plants, and emissions from cement plants and oil refineries.

bill, which that chamber has already rejected, would drop the payroll tax to 3.1 percent next year and provide employers with similar reductions, as Obama has proposed.

If Congress takes no action by Jan. 1, the payroll tax will return to 6.2 percent. Congress is hoping to adjourn for the year before Christmas.

The House GOP bill would also curtail the current 99 weeks of maximum unemployment coverage, dropping it gradually to 59 weeks by mid-2012.

Boehner: House will approve payroll tax cut bill

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Speaker John Boehner predicted Monday that the House will approve legislation that renews a payroll tax cut and curtails extra benefits for the long-term unemployed.

The House is expected to approve the roughly \$180 billion measure on Tuesday. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has said the bill will go nowhere in the Senate, citing a provision all but forcing President Barack Obama to move

ahead quickly with a controversial oil pipeline that would run from Canada to Texas.

Boehner, R-Ohio, sidestepped a question about whether he rules out eventually agreeing to a compromise with that chamber.

"The House is going to do its job, in time for the Senate then to do its job," Boehner told reporters.

Senate Democrats' version of the bill pays its costs largely by boosting taxes on the

wealthy. Republicans prefer freezing federal workers pay and other spending cuts.

The House legislation would continue the Social Security payroll tax that workers pay at 4.2 percent in 2012, the same as this year. That tax is normally 6.2 percent, but was temporarily cut in a bid to spur the economy. The reduction means an extra \$1,000 in the wallets of families earning \$50,000 annually.

The Democrats' Senate

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Delta: Domestic load factor spikes 3.2 pts in November

Delta Air Lines reported that domestic load factor increased 3.2 points to 83.5 percent, as traffic increased 1.4 percent on 2.6 percent lower capacity over the prior year. System load factor, meanwhile, increased 1.9 points to 81.4 percent, as traffic declined 1.9 percent on 4.1 percent lower capacity year over year. International load factor decreased slightly to 77.8 percent, as traffic declined 7.3 percent on 6.5 percent lower capacity year over year. For further information, contact Virgie Avendano-Woodruff, Glimpses Advertising 235-7645 ext. 23, media@delta.com or Investor Relations, +1-404-715-2170. (PR)

Fed nearing a plan to clarify direction of rates

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Federal Reserve under Ben Bernanke has gone further than ever to explain its policies to the public. It's ready to go further still. A Fed policy meeting Tuesday will likely focus, in part, on an evolving plan to reveal the direction of interest rates more explicitly. The Fed may decide, for ex-

ample, to regularly update the public on how long it plans to keep short-term rates at record lows. The new communications strategy could be unveiled as soon as next month. Most analysts expect no announcements Tuesday about the new strategy or any further steps to try to strengthen the economy. They think the Fed wants to delay any new programs, such as additional bond purchases, to see if the economy can continue the modest gains it's been making.

Lowe's stands by decision to pull ads

NEW YORK (AP)—Home improvement chain Lowe's plans to stick by its decision to yank its ads from a reality TV show about American Muslims amid growing debate over the move. California Sen. Ted Lieu said Sunday that he is considering calling for a boycott of Lowe's Cos., sparking criticism of the chain from both inside and outside of the Muslim community. On social media website Twitter, actor Kal Penn began directing people to a petition on signon.org in support of the TLC cable network show, "All-American Muslim." By Monday afternoon, there were about 9,200 signatures.

STOCK PORTFOLIO



LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
12,021.40	1,236.47	2,612.26
-162.87	-18.72	-34.59
-1.34%	-1.49%	-1.31%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms	Australian Dollar	0.9916	Indian Rupee	53.3150	Singapore Dollar	1.3019
	British Pound	0.6406	Indonesian Rupiah	9,065.00	South Korean Won	1,154.15
	Canadian Dollar	1.0265	Japanese Yen	77.8800	Swiss Franc	0.9370
	Chinese Yuan	6.3566	Malaysian Ringgit	3.1810	Taiwan Dollar	30.2520
	Euro	0.7578	New Zealand Dollar	1.3080	Thailand Baht	31.1900

Nation

High Court to review tough Arizona immigration law

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court stepped into the fight Monday over a tough Arizona law that requires local police to help enforce federal immigration laws—pushing the court deeper into hot, partisan issues of the 2012 election campaign.

The court's election-year docket now contains three politically charged disputes, including President Barack Obama's health care overhaul and Texas redistricting.

The debate over immigration already is shaping presidential politics, and now the court is undertaking a review of an Arizona law that has spawned a host of copycat state laws targeting illegal immigrants.

The court will review a federal appeals court ruling that blocked several provisions in the Arizona law. One of those requires that police, while enforcing other laws, question a person's immigration status if officers suspect he is in the country illegally.

The case is the court's biggest foray into immigration law in decades, said Temple University law professor Peter Spiro, an expert in that area.

The Obama administration challenged the Arizona law by arguing that regulating immigration is the job of the federal government, not states. Similar laws in Alabama, South Carolina and Utah also are facing administration lawsuits. Private groups are suing over immigration measures adopted in Georgia and Indiana.



Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, R, speaks Monday, Dec. 12, 2011 at the Capitol in Phoenix regarding the Supreme Court's agreement to rule on Arizona's controversial law targeting illegal immigrants.

gia and Indiana.

"This case is not just about Arizona. It's about every state grappling with the costs of illegal immigration," Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, a Republican, said following the court's announcement Monday.

Fifty-nine Republicans in

Congress, including presidential candidate Michele Bachmann, filed a brief with the court backing the Arizona law.

The immigration case, like the challenge to Obama's health care overhaul, pits Republican-led states against the Democratic administration in an argument

about the reach of federal power. The redistricting case has a similarly partisan tinge to it, with Republicans who control the state government in Texas facing off against Democrats and minority groups that tend vote Democratic.

In the immigration arena, the states say that the federal government isn't doing enough to address a major problem and that border states are suffering disproportionately.

The issue has been widely discussed by the Republican candidates for president. They have mostly embraced a hard line to avoid accusations that they support any kind of "amnesty" for the some 12 million illegal immigrants estimated to be living in the U.S.

Newt Gingrich was most recently criticized by his opponents for saying he would grant legal status to some with long-standing family and community ties, and Gingrich has since endorsed the South Carolina law that allows police to demand a person's immigration status. That law is among the four state laws that have been challenged by the administration.

Brewer signed the Arizona immigration measure into law in April 2010. The administration sued three months later to block it from taking effect.

In April, a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco upheld a federal judge's ruling halting enforcement of several provisions of the law. Among the blocked

provisions: requiring all immigrants to obtain or carry immigration registration papers; making it a state criminal offense for an illegal immigrant to seek work or hold a job and allowing police to arrest suspected illegal immigrants without warrants.

In October, the federal appeals court in Atlanta blocked parts of the Alabama law that forced public schools to check the immigration status of students and allowed police to file criminal charges against people who were unable to prove their citizenship.

Lawsuits in South Carolina and Utah are not as far along.

The administration argued that the justices should have waited to see how other courts ruled on the challenges to other laws before getting involved.

Still, following the court's announcement Monday, White House spokesman Jay Carney said, "We look forward to arguing our point of view in that case when the time comes."

Spiro, the Temple University immigration expert, said the court easily could have passed on the Arizona case for now. "They could have waited for the more extreme case to come from Alabama, which really outflanked the Arizona law," Spiro said.

He predicted the court would uphold the police check of immigration status but perhaps not the measure making it a crime to be without immigration documents. Arguments probably will take place in late April, which would give the court roughly two months to decide the case

Driver was texting in Missouri traffic pileup

WASHINGTON (AP)—A 19-year-old driver was texting just before his pickup truck, two school buses and a tractor truck collided in a deadly pileup on an interstate highway in Missouri last year, the National Transportation Safety Board said Monday.

Two people—the pickup driver and a 15-year-old student on one of the buses—were killed and 38 others were injured in the Aug. 5, 2010 accident on the interstate highway near Gray Summit, Mo. Nearly 50 students, mostly members of a high school band from St. James, Mo., were on the buses heading to the Six Flags St. Louis amusement park.

The chain of rear end collisions began when the pickup truck rammed the back of the tractor truck, the board said. The pickup was then rear-ended by a school bus, which was in turn struck by the second bus. The board is scheduled to meet Tuesday to hear the results of an investigation into the accident and to make safety recommendations. The meeting will focus on the "distractive effects of portable electronic devices when used by drivers," the board said in a statement.

The board has previously recommended bans on texting and cell phone use by commercial drivers, but has stopped short of calling for a ban on the use of the devices by adults behind the wheel of passenger cars.

NTSB Chairman Deborah Hersman said that as the use of personal electronic devices proliferates, investigators are increasingly coming across accidents in all modes of transportation—aviation, marine, rail and on the road—in which operators were texting, talking on cell phones or working on laptops.

"This is trending very hot and it's a growing concern for the NTSB," she told The Associated Press.

The problem of texting while driving is getting worse despite a rush by states to ban the practice, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said last week. In November, Pennsylvania became the 35th state to forbid texting while driving.

About two out of 10 drivers overall—and half of American drivers between 21 and 24—say they've thumbed messages or emailed from the driver's seat, according to a survey of over 6,000 drivers by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

War nearly over, Obama says Iraq won't stand alone

WASHINGTON (AP)—Eager to put the long and divisive Iraq war to rest, President Barack Obama declared Monday "those days are over" with the last American troops heading home, but he pledged the U.S. would remain committed to the fledgling government they leave behind. He and Iraq's leader somberly saluted America's war dead at Arlington National Cemetery.

"A war is ending," the president said, standing with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki at the White House. U.S. troops are leaving "with honor and with their heads held high," said Obama, who strongly opposed the war as a candidate for the White House.

The last American troops are to be out of Iraq by Dec. 31. Thousands of others are still in Afghanistan.

Just 6,000 remain in Iraq, down from 170,000 at the war's peak in 2007.

The withdrawal will cap a war in which nearly 4,500 Americans were killed, roughly 32,000 were wounded, hundreds of billions of dollars were spent and the American political debate was consumed until economic woes brought attention back home.

Obama had already said weeks ago that he was pulling all troops by year's end, leaving his appearance with al-Maliki to focus instead on what's next—a relationship both lead-

ers described as rich in shared interests, from education to oil, politics to security.

To the Iraqi people, who still face massive challenges in rebuilding a society ripped apart by nearly nine years of war, Obama said: "You will not stand alone."

The United States, in fact, needs the help of Iraq in dealing with the volatile Middle East and two of neighbors in particular, Iran and Syria. In getting out of Iraq, Obama emphasized that "our strong presence in the Middle East endures" and the United States won't soften in its defense of its interests.

In the midst of a re-election run, Obama is using the war's

end to both honor the military's sacrifice and to remind the nation the unpopular war is ending on his watch. He is to deliver his war-is-over message in TV interviews on Tuesday and then again on Wednesday in remarks to troops at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Obama opposed the war from the start and eventually rode that stand to the White House.

In a 2002 speech during the months before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq began, when Obama was a U.S. senator from Illinois, he that "What I am opposed to is a dumb war. What I am opposed to is a rash war."

On Monday, speaking as a commander in chief, Obama put the focus on Iraq's future.

ACROSS THE NATION

New US data shows continuing drop in child abuse

NEW YORK (AP)—Fears that persisting economic woes would increase child abuse in the U.S. have proved unfounded, according to the latest federal data. A comprehensive new report, to be formally unveiled Wednesday, shows overall abuse and neglect figures declining slightly between 2008 and 2010, and child fatalities dropping by 8.5 percent during that span. "The recession hasn't had the draconian effect that some feared," said Richard Gelles, dean of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice and an expert on child welfare. "The doom and gloom predictions haven't come true."

NYPD officer shot, killed at scene of break-in

NEW YORK (AP)—A 22-year veteran police officer responding to a break-in Monday morning was shot in the face and killed by one of the suspects hiding inside the apartment when officers arrived, police said. Officer Peter Figoski, who could have retired two

years ago with a full pension, was pronounced dead at a hospital just hours after the shooting, authorities said. Lamont Pride, 27, was arrested and faces murder charges. There was no answer to calls at a Greensboro, N.C., address where he said he lived, and there was no phone listed for a Brooklyn home. It's unclear when he would be arraigned, and there

was no information on whether he had an attorney. A second suspect was being sought.

Funeral: Hundreds mourn slain Va. Tech officer

BLACKSBURG, Va. (AP)—A Virginia Tech police officer ambushed in a shooting that revived memories of the 2007 massacre on campus was eulogized before hundreds as a loving husband, father and public servant. Bagpipers somberly escorted the flag-draped coffin of Deriek W. Crouse into a campus coliseum for Monday's funeral as officers, family, friends and dignitaries looked on. Gov. Bob McDonnell called the Army veteran who had served in Iraq a lifelong public servant.

Asia

PH Supreme Court chief justice impeached

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine House of Representatives impeached the Supreme Court chief justice Monday over alleged corruption and favoritism toward the country's former president, now under hospital arrest for alleged election fraud.

A majority of the 284 members of the powerful House signed the resolution to impeach Chief Justice Renato Corona, who will now be tried by the Senate in an impeachment tribunal. Corona, who became the only known Supreme Court chief to be impeached in Philippine history, vowed to fight back.

Among its allegations, the impeachment complaint accuses the Corona-led court of ruling improperly in ex-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's favor when she sought to leave the country last month before she was arrested.

The surprise move is the latest twist in the Philippine political drama pitting Arroyo against her popular, reformist successor Benigno Aquino III, who has blamed her for a decade of corruption scandals that eroded public trust in government and held back foreign investors.

Arroyo appointed the Supreme Court chief justice short-



In this Monday, Dec. 5, 2011 photo provided by Malacanang Palace in Manila, Philippine President Benigno Aquino III, right, greets Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona during the 1st National Criminal Justice Summit in Manila, Philippines.

ly before she stepped down last year. Aquino has been at odds with Corona, accusing him of being biased for Arroyo and hampering her prosecution.

Aquino, son of revered democracy icons, succeeded her last year after a landslide election victory largely credited to his illustrious name and prom-

ise to battle corruption and poverty in his Southeast Asian nation. His allies dominate the House, which had been the bedrock of Arroyo's power.

Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., who heads the congressional justice committee, said Corona was impeached due to eight acts of alleged corruption and improperly issuing decisions that favored Arroyo.

A Manila court ordered Arroyo arrested on Nov. 18 in her hospital room after she was charged with ordering the rigging of 2007 senatorial elections to favor her candidates. She has denied any wrongdoing and has hired a battery of lawyers to defend her.

Arroyo, 64, is detained in a government hospital while awaiting trial. She has sought treatment for a bone ailment.

Last month, the Supreme Court lifted a travel ban on her, and she tried to leave the country with her husband. Aquino's justice secretary, however, defied the Supreme Court order and asked airport authorities to stop her from leaving.

Corona "betrayed the public trust through his partiality" when his court issued the order to allow Arroyo "an opportunity to escape prosecution and to frustrate the ends of justice," the impeachment complaint says.

The high tribunal, where 12 of the 15 justices were appointed by Arroyo, said the order was valid.

Corona also allegedly violated the constitution and an anti-graft act when he failed

to publicly disclose all his properties. "Respondent is suspected of having accumulated ill-gotten wealth, acquiring assets of high values and keeping bank accounts with huge deposits," according to the complaint.

Corona has served as Arroyo's chief of staff, spokesman and acting executive secretary. Arroyo appointed his wife in 2007 to the board of a state-run corporation, said the complaint, which also cited alleged irregularities in Corona's handling of court funds.

Corona said efforts to illegally oust him would destroy the country's democracy.

"We do not want to see a constitutional crisis befall our democracy," Corona said. "But if we are challenged to defend our independence, we shall not meekly walk away."

Corona stressed he would not resign.

Rep. Edcel Lagman, an Arroyo ally, accused the Aquino administration of coercing lawmakers to sign the impeachment complaint by threatening to block budgets for their provincial districts. The complaint, Lagman said, "is the mother of all blackmails."

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said senators would likely tackle the impeachment complaint in January after a monthlong Christmas break starting on Wednesday.

Philippine military chief to focus on Spratlys row

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A battle-scarred general took leadership of the underfunded Philippine military Monday, vowing to bolster his country's external defense so it could adequately respond to "untoward incidents" amid territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

The 125,000-member Philippine military, one of Asia's weakest, has been struggling to modernize its dilapidated air force and navy and train its forces due to a lack of funds. President Benigno Aquino III recently said he would seek modern fighter jets from longtime ally Washington when he visits next year.

Army Lt. Gen. Jessie Dellosa,

who took over the military leadership in austere ceremonies led by Aquino on Monday, said recent developments in the South China Sea—obviously referring to renewed territorial spats in the potentially oil-rich region—have made upgrading external defenses inevitable for the Philippines.

"It compels us to look into our maritime security deeply," Dellosa said in his speech. "Development of navy and air force bases and facilities to efficiently respond to untoward incidents is something we can no longer ignore."

Dellosa formerly was an army combat officer and was wounded twice while battling

Muslim guerrillas and al-Qaida-linked militants in the southern Philippines. He also led an elite unit that helped Aquino's mother, the late pro-democracy Philippine leader Corazon Aquino, subdue coup attempts.

Dellosa replaced Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr., who focused on battling graft and corruption in the military during his stint. Dellosa said he would also wage "an all-out war" against military corruption.

Already spread thinly while dealing with raging Muslim and communist insurgencies, the military began to focus on external defense specially after Filipino officials accused Chinese government vessels of repeatedly intrud-

ing into Philippine-claimed territories in and near the South China Sea's disputed Spratly Islands in the first half of the year.

Philippine and Vietnamese authorities also accused Chinese vessels of trying to sabotage oil explorations within their territorial waters, an allegation Beijing has denied.

China, the Philippines and Vietnam, along with Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei claim the South China Sea and its cluster of islands, islets, reefs and coral outcrops partly or in its entirety. The region is believed to be sitting atop vast deposits of oil and natural gas and also straddle busy sealanes.

China says mulling Seychelles naval hosting offer

BEIJING (AP)—An offer from the Seychelles to host visits by Chinese naval ships is drawing heavy publicity in Beijing and highlighting the increasing reach of a navy that recently launched its first aircraft carrier.

A Defense Ministry statement Tuesday said Beijing is considering an offer from the Indian island nation's government to allow Chinese navy ships to visit for rest and resupply.

Those vessels would be part of a multinational force conducting anti-piracy patrols off the coast of Somalia that China

has participated in since late 2008. Chinese ships assigned to patrols in the Gulf of Aden have visited several ports to allow their crews to rest and to take on supplies, including in Yemen and Oman on the Arabian Peninsula and Djibouti on the Horn of Africa.

Major newspapers including the official China Daily gave prominent coverage to the offer. They said the invitation was issued during a visit to the Seychelles by Defense Minister Liang Guanglie earlier this month.

The Chinese navy has grown

in recent years from a coastal protection force to one spanning the globe, sending ships as far as the Caribbean on goodwill missions and into the Mediterranean to escort vessels evacuating Chinese citizens from the fighting in Libya. However, the reports were eager to state China's firm policy of not establishing permanent military bases overseas, a cornerstone of Beijing's claim not to be seeking regional hegemony or military alliances with other nations.

That policy has come into

question in recent years as China travels further abroad in search of economic opportunities and resources for its growing economy. Chinese academics and military thinkers have floated hitherto unheard-of proposals for bases in the Indian Ocean to protect energy supply lines, only to be met with crisp disavowals from the government.

The issue of Chinese naval activity in the Indian Ocean is of particular interest to India, which has long-standing border disputes with China and is deeply suspicious of China's close ties with archrival Pakistan.

ASIAN BRIEFS

84-year-old sultan becomes Malaysia's oldest king

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysia's new king, an 84-year-old state sultan, ascended the throne Tuesday, becoming the oldest constitutional monarch in the Southeast Asian nation's history. Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah took his oath of office in a nationally televised ceremony attended by hundreds of dignitaries at a glittering yellow hall in Malaysia's new federal palace. Under a unique system maintained since Malaysia's independence from Britain in 1957, nine hereditary state rulers take turns as the country's king for five-year terms.

Papua New Guinea court rules Somare is leader

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (AP)—The Papua New Guinea Supreme Court has ruled the election of Prime Minister Peter O'Neill is unconstitutional and restored his predecessor Sir Michael Somare as the South Pacific nation's leader. The decision was handed down in a 3-2 ruling on

Monday hours after O'Neill's government passed a series of retrospective laws legalizing its decision to dump Somare from office while he was in Singapore recovering from a heart condition. The court found that there was no vacancy in the office of prime minister on Aug. 2 and that the vote of 70 to 24 lawmakers that elected O'Neill was illegal.

15 Chinese children killed in school bus accident

BEIJING (AP)—A school bus carrying primary students slipped off an icy country road into an irrigation ditch in eastern China, killing at least 15 children and highlighting serious problems with child safety following a similar tragedy last month. Eight other children were injured, one of them seriously, a spokesman for the Jiangsu provincial government said Tuesday. The accident happened Monday evening as the bus was traveling along a rural highway outside the city of Xuzhou in the province's north. Chinese news reports said the bus careened off the road after swerving to avoid a pedicab.

World

UN says death toll in Syria exceeds 5,000

BEIRUT (AP)—The death toll from Syria's crackdown on a 9-month-old uprising has exceeded 5,000 people, the top U.N. rights official said Monday, as Syrians closed their businesses and kept children home from school as part of a general strike to pressure President Bashar Assad to end the bloodshed.

Navi Pillay, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, said at least 300 children are among those killed in the Assad regime's attempts to stamp out the revolt, and that thousands of people remain in detention.

Speaking at the United Nations, Pillay said she told Security Council members of the increase in deaths during an afternoon briefing, and said she recommended that the council refer Syria to the International Criminal Court, the permanent war crimes tribunal, for investigation of possible crimes against humanity.

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Susan Rice, said Pillay's briefing "underscores the urgency of the present moment," and urged the U.N. Security Council to take concrete steps to bring the violence to an end.

Assad has shown no little sign of easing his crackdown, despite mounting international pressure, including a recent spate of economic sanctions from the EU, the Arab League and Turkey, that are punishing



A man flashes the victory sign during a protest demanding the release of Syrian refugee Ahmed al-Shureiqi in front of the Syrian Embassy in Amman, Jordan, Sunday, Dec. 11, 2011

the Syrian economy, a dangerous development for the government in Damascus.

Now, the open-ended strike by Syrian businesses also takes direct aim at Syria's already ailing economy. It is designed to erode Assad's main base of support—the new and vibrant merchant classes who have benefited in recent years as the president opened up the economy.

If the economy continues to collapse, Assad could find himself with few allies inside the country, where calls are grow-

ing by the day for him to step down. The authoritarian president is already struggling under international isolation and suffocating sanctions.

It is difficult to gauge the strength of the strike because the regime has banned most foreign journalists and prevented local reporters from moving freely. But there were signs it was being widely observed in particular in centers of anti-government protest: the southern province of Daraa, the suburbs of the capital, Damascus, the

northwestern region of Idlib and in the restive city of Homs.

The opposition wants the strike to remain in force until the regime pulls the army out of cities and releases thousands of detainees.

"Only bakeries, pharmacies and some vegetable shops are open," said one resident of Homs who asked that his name not be published for fear of reprisals. He said those stores stayed open because they sell essential goods.

In addition to the strike, he said, security was tight in Homs on Monday with agents

deployed at every intersection. The crackle of gunfire erupted sporadically. "There is a terrifying security deployment in Homs," he said.

Activists said a new round of clashes between Syrian troops and army defectors began Sunday with a major battle in the south and spread to new areas Monday, raising fears the conflict is spiraling toward civil war.

The British-based Syrian Ob-

servatory for Human Rights says new clashes between soldiers and defectors were reported Monday in Idlib in the north, and that fighting continued for a second day in southern Daraa province. Four members of the security forces were killed as a result of the clashes there, the Observatory said. A day earlier, army defectors set several military vehicles ablaze in a prolonged battle in Daraa province.

NJ Nets owner challenges Putin for Russia presidency

MOSCOW (AP)—After a week of surprising challenges to his authority, Vladimir Putin faces a new one from one of Russia's richest and most glamorous figures: The billionaire owner of the New Jersey Nets says he will run against him in March's presidential election.

The announcement Monday by Mikhail Prokhorov underlines the extent of the discontent with Putin, who has dominated Russian politics for a dozen years—first as president, then as prime minister.

It comes on the heels of Saturday's unprecedented nationwide protests against Putin and his party, United Russia. Tens of thousands of people gathered in the streets to denounce alleged election fraud favoring United Russia in Dec. 4 parliamentary elections.

The fraud and the party's comparatively poor showing in the elections—losing about 20 percent of its seats, although it retained a narrow majority—galvanized long-marginalized opposition forces to conduct a startling series of demonstrations, including an enormous rally of at least 30,000 in Moscow alone.

In yet another challenge to Putin, his former finance minister, Alexei Kudrin, said Monday he was ready to work to form a new party.

At a news conference announcing his candidacy, Prokhorov refrained from criticizing Putin or President Dmitry Medvedev, but he said "society is waking up."

"Those authorities who will

Russian businessman

Mikhail Prokhorov

Early life
Born May 3, 1965, Moscow
Education Graduated with honors 1989, Moscow Finance Institute
Wealth Russia's third-richest man; estimated worth at \$18 billion

Building wealth
1993-present Chairman of the Onexim Bank board; engineers acquisition of Norilsk Nickel in 1995
2001-07 Overhauls Norilsk Nickel; sells most of its nonmining assets and creates Polyus Gold
May 2007 Launches private investment firm, Onexim Group; focuses on technology, mining
April 2008 Sells 25 percent stake in Norilsk Nickel to RusAl, an aluminum producer, in return for large cash payment and 14 percent of RusAl stock
2010 Buys an 80 percent stake in the New Jersey Nets; owns 45 percent interest in Barclays Center

Entering politics
May 2011 Elected leader of the pro-business Right Cause party
Dec. 2011 Announces he will run in the 2012 presidential election as an independent against Vladimir Putin

Source: MCT Photo Service, BBC, The Moscow Times, Forbes © 2011 MCT

fail to establish a dialogue with society will have to go," he declared.

Medvedev has promised on his Facebook page that the alleged vote fraud will be investigated. But Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, predicted Monday the probe will show that little vote fraud occurred and that it had no effect on the outcome.

Canada pulls out of Kyoto Protocol

TORONTO (AP)—Canada pulled out of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change Monday, saying the accord won't help solve the climate crisis. It dealt a blow to the anti-global warming treaty, which has not been formally renounced by any other country.

Environment Minister Peter Kent said that Canada is invoking its legal right to withdraw and said Kyoto doesn't represent the way forward for Canada or the world.

Canada, joined by Japan and Russia, said last year it will not accept new Kyoto commitments, but withdrawing from the accord is another setback to the treaty concluded with much fanfare in 1997.

The protocol, initially adopted in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997, is aimed at fighting global warming. Canada's previous Liberal government signed the accord but did little to implement it and Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government never embraced it.

"The Kyoto Protocol does not cover the world's largest two emitters, United States and China, and therefore cannot work," Kent said. "It's now clear that Kyoto is not the path forward to a global solution to climate change. If anything it's an impediment."

Kent's announcement comes a day after marathon climate talks wrapped up in the South African port city of Durban.

Negotiators from nearly 200

countries agreed on a deal that sets the world on a path to sign a new climate treaty by 2015 to replace the first Kyoto Protocol, which expires at the end of next year.

Kent said the Durban agreement does represent a path forward. Durban's accord envisions a new treaty with binding targets for all countries to take effect in 2020.

"It allows us to continue to create jobs and growth in Canada," Kent said.

Monday's announcement was not a surprise. Canada faced international criticism at the recent climate talks in South Africa amid reports it would pull out of Kyoto. Kent had said previously

that signing the Kyoto Protocol on climate change was one of the previous government's biggest blunders.

The accord requires countries to give a year's notice to withdraw. Kent said the move saves Canada \$14 billion in penalties for not achieving its Kyoto targets.

"To meet the targets under Kyoto for 2012 would be the equivalent of either removing every car, truck, ATV, tractor, ambulance, police car and vehicle of every kind from Canadian roads or closing down the entire farming and agriculture sector and cutting heat to every home, office, hospital, factory and building in Canada," Kent said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Canada bans burqa at citizenship swearing in

TORONTO (AP)—New Canadian citizens must remove any face coverings, such as the Islamic niqab or burqa, while they take the oath of citizenship, the country's immigration minister said Monday. Jason Kenney said most Canadians find the practice of reciting the oath behind a veil disturbing and said

new Canadians should take it in view of their fellow citizens. He said he has received complaints from lawmakers and citizenship judges who say it's difficult to ensure that individuals whose faces are covered are actually reciting the oath. The Conservative minister called the issue a matter of deep principle that goes to the heart of Canada's identity and the country's values of openness

and equality.

Mexico navy catches a founder of Zetas drug cartel

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexican marines captured a founding member of the brutal Zetas drug cartel Monday, the navy announced. Marines arrested Raul Lucio Hernandez Lechuga in the city of Cordoba

in the state of Veracruz, where the Zetas are fighting for control against a gang allied to the Sinaloa drug cartel, the navy said in a statement. Hernandez, known as "Lucky," was the leader of the Zetas for the states of Veracruz, Puebla and Oaxaca, it said. The federal government had offered a 15 million-peso reward, about \$1.2 million, for information

leading to his arrest.

US, UK welcome Russian pledge to probe vote fraud

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration has welcomed Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's promise to investigate allegations of fraud in recent parliamentary elections. But Secretary of

State Hillary Rodham Clinton says the proof of the Russian government's resolve will be in how it conducts the probe and what actions it ultimately takes. Clinton called the government's willingness to investigate "reassuring." She said the U.S. is pleased that protests across Russia because of the elections have remained peaceful.

Focus

Santa finds kids giving shorter lists in recession

By MARTHA WAGGONER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP)—A job for their mom or dad. Money for the heating bill. Food or a place to live. Maybe gloves or boots.

More and more, Santas say the children on their laps are asking for less—and Santa is promising less as well.

With unemployment stubbornly high, more homes in foreclosure and the economic outlook dim, many children who visit Santa are all too aware of the struggle to make ends meet.

“These children understand the conditions around the home when they ask for stuff. They understand when there are other children in the family, they need to be cautious or thoughtful of them as well and not ask for 10 to 12 items,” said Richard Holden, a 69-year-old Santa from Gastonia, North Carolina.

Cliff Snider, who’s been playing Santa since he was a teenager, agrees.

“I think the parents are saying, ‘It’s an economic thing. Just list two to three things you really want to have,’” he said. “Parents are trying to encourage the children to be thrifty.”

And the 64-year-old Snider does his best to help out. When he gets a big-ticket request, he typically responds: “There’s an awful lot of children asking for that this year. What else do you want?”

At the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School, Santas learn lines like, “Wow, that’s a big gift. Is there anything else you might like?”

These days, though, Santas are having to use it less and less.

“I think it’s becoming more popular not to have that long list,” said Tom Valent, dean of the Howard Santa school in Midland, Michigan, which gets more than 3,000 letters to Santa a year and just graduated its 75th class. “Families are teaching their children to be as much of a giver as a receiver.”

Starlight Fonseca has been teaching her five children, ages 5 to 14, “that we’re not the only ones who have to cut things back. We’re not the only ones struggling.”

The 31-year-old mother and her husband Jose had been relying on a stipend from the University of Texas law school that Fonseca lost when an illness made it impossible for her to keep her grades up. She’d hoped to graduate in May but was unable to attend school this semester and can’t get student loans due to poor credit.

Fonseca tells her kids that “to make it fair for everyone, Santa has to cut back for everyone. ... We paint it in a way that Santa is doing the best he can to make everybody happy at Christmas.”

It’s especially hard for the oldest children.

“They were two little kids who used to be excited about Christmas, and now they know every gift under the tree should have gone to the utility company,” she said. “It shouldn’t be that way, but that’s where we are now.”

Of course, Santas still see some kids like the 9-year-old who pulled out a BlackBerry and showed Snider photos of all the things he wanted. “It cracked me up,” he said.

Holden’s response to a long list is to say something like, “Why don’t you narrow this down just a little bit and



In this Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2011 photo, Santa, Cliff Snider, gets a kiss on the cheek from Bella Champion, 3, during a Christmas photo shoot at the “Beach Shack” in Emerald Isle, N.C.

AP

Forget the fruitcake: Give skydiving lessons

NEW YORK (AP)—Forget the material things—reindeer sweaters, clunky toys, stocking stuffers that end up as, well, stuff. How about a skydiving lesson, a spa pampering or a night at a cozy bed and breakfast?

This holiday season, a lasting memory is worth a thousand knick-knacks.

With less money to spend in the weak economy, and with daily-deal sites like Groupon growing in popularity, more Americans are giving experiences instead of glitzy gifts. Think comfort and joy, not five golden rings.

Instead of sneakers or electronic gizmos, Denise Bailey and her husband are treating their two teenage boys to a Dallas Cowboys game, dinner at a steakhouse and a family night in a hotel.

Because it’s sure to cost hundreds of dollars, the parents let the boys choose between the night on the town and store-bought gifts. Bailey was surprised by their decision.

“That said a lot to me, that they are wanting that memory, that experience,” says Bailey, from Abilene, Texas. “That family time is for me as a mom the most precious gift I can have.”

There’s no reliable way to track how much shoppers are spending on experience gifts this year compared with last. Restaurants, spas and other businesses don’t always know if people are buying their services as gifts or for themselves.

But shoppers are expected to spend \$80 million to \$100 million on deal sites over the holidays—as much as 10 times more than last year—according to an estimate for North America from Yipit, a site that collects daily deals from across the Web.

“Deal sites get a lot of credit for bringing new and unusual experiences to the attention of people who might not have thought about them,” says

Dan Hess, CEO of Dealradar.com, another site that aggregates deals.

Groupon, the biggest deal site, sold 650,000 of its “Grouponics” deals—the name is an apparent play on the secular “Seinfeld” holiday of Festivus—in the four days after Thanksgiving, six times as many as last year. The company wouldn’t give dollar amounts.

LivingSocial, the No. 2 deal site, sold more than 281,000 vouchers during the first three days of its “12 Days of Giving” promotion—about one and a half times what it sold last year. The number given as gifts has more than doubled.

For those ready to take the plunge, there are as many options for experience-giving as Santa has elves.

In New York, LivingSocial had a \$100 deal for a wine-tasting and meatball-cooking class taught by the chef of Little Owl restaurant. It sold out in an hour. In Austin, Texas, Groupon offered a package of classes valued at \$2,300 for \$999. Included: a five-hour pyrotechnics workshop, a stunt driving course and hand-to-hand-combat training. In Toronto, it offered dog-sledding lessons for two for \$74, half off.

While there’s no way to tell how many of them were given as gifts, Sheri Bridges, a marketing professor at Wake Forest University, says experiences are the best gifts for the person who has everything.

“Something time-starved people don’t have is quality time with people they love,” she says.

Kevin O’Connor, 26, of Overland Park, Kan., found a spa massage on Groupon to give his girlfriend for Christmas. It normally goes for \$132 but cost him \$62. To add suspense, he plans to put the printed Groupon in a big box.

“She saw it on there but didn’t want to buy it because it was some extra thing she didn’t want to spend

money on,” he says.

Kristen Vannice bought her boyfriend flying lessons on a glider, a small plane that runs without power using air currents. For \$99 from the Soaring Society of America, she got him a lesson, instruction materials and a few months’ membership to a glider training group.

“He always talked about it kind of longingly, and I knew it was just the kind of thing he probably wouldn’t get around to taking the initiative to do himself,” says Vannice, 29, a doctoral student at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Baltimore. “We rarely pamper ourselves with nice or new experiences.”

Still, as with any gift, givers of online daily deals have to proceed with caution.

They come with expiration dates, and if your brother keeps hectoring you about whether you’ve taken that hot air balloon ride, it can get awkward. Plus, you can always take a necktie back, but returning a day of zip-lining is tricky without a time machine.

And the deals are basically coupons, which can carry a stigma. LivingSocial offers what it calls virtual gift wrap—the recipient gets his or her deal in a fancy envelope, and without seeing what the giver paid. Groupon recipients only see a description of the offer, and sometimes the regular price of the experience.

Then there are other gift faux pas to consider.

Aaron Cooper, whose job title is chief of gifting at Groupon, said givers should make sure to tailor their gifts to the person so it’s something they can use. Not, say, skydiving lessons for 86-year-old Aunt Bertha.

Maire Griffin, a LivingSocial spokeswoman, agrees: “You’re not going to give anyone Botox. If you are, you’re not going to be their friend anymore.”

choose two or three items you would really like?” Sometimes he’ll even mention prices, and say, “With things like they are, Santa Claus will do what he can to help you get what you like. But we can’t make you any promises.”

Tim Connaghan, who runs the International University for Santa Claus in Riverside, California, conducts an annual survey among the 500 Santas he employs. The economy has become such a big issue that Connaghan asked them for advice on how to handle some of the questions kids were asking about unemployed parents or having to move.

“Let’s all hope your dad will find a new job, or you will get into a new home,” is one recommended response.

“Acknowledge the problem, give them a positive response and say, ‘Santa loves you, too. Maybe I could get something special for you,’” said Connaghan. “It’s that quick, usually. But the hope is that when the child leaves, he feels a little better.”

Connaghan recalled the night he and other Santas took some needy children shopping. One boy wanted to buy toilet paper because his mother was taking napkins and paper towels from a fast food restaurant for toilet paper.

“He wanted to buy her real toilet paper—a common, everyday item that we all take for granted,” Connaghan said. “And this child is thinking this is a Christmas gift.”

Holden has had children ask for things like heat at home. He’ll tell the child Santa will do what he can, then try to let the parents know about agencies that might help.

One child returned a year later and “said she wanted to thank Santa for getting her some help when they didn’t have food or a place to stay.” Someone had overheard the conversation with Santa and helped the family.

“There’s more to being a Santa Claus than you think there is,” Holden said. “You don’t just go ‘ho, ho, ho,’ pat them on the back of the head and send them on their way. You get involved with them. ... You just make sure they feel loved and they feel special when they leave your lap.”

Campus Life

Community colleges recognized for excellence

By MARIA RECIO
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON—It was a high-profile day for a low-profile local institution: the community college, with 10 community colleges around the country honored Monday at the National Press Club as part of the competition for the first \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

Valencia College of Orlando, Fla., was the big winner, with a \$600,000 award. Four other finalists each received \$100,000: Miami Dade College of Miami,

Walla Walla Community College of Washington state, West Kentucky Community and Technical College of Paducah, and Lake Area Technical Institute of Watertown, S.D. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College and four other finalists received glass trophies.

Jill Biden, wife of the vice president and a community college instructor, joined Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Aspen Institute chief executive officer Walter Isaacson at the luncheon event.

“Community colleges are the best-kept secret in America,”

Biden said. “As a teacher, I am fortunate to be in the classroom every week and able to see firsthand the tremendous impact community colleges have on so many students.”

“This is community college’s day in the sun,” said Duncan, who said President Barack Obama’s goal of having 8 million more U.S. college graduates by 2020 relies heavily on community colleges to graduate 5 million.

“All of you are winners,” he said before the prize was announced. “I don’t care who gets the Aspen Prize. Community

colleges are the answer for people trying to take the next step up the economic ladder.”

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College president Mary Graham accepted the trophy and, asked whether she was disappointed not to win a prize with award money, said, “No, I’m not disappointed at all. Just to be part of the process was quite an honor. It catapults the role of the community college to the forefront.”

According to the school’s citation: “This college is a national model for linking its degree programs with the workforce

needs of Gulf Coast employers, and for taking special care to serve America’s war veterans and their families.” The college is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

Miami Dade College, which is the largest educational institution in the country with 174,000 students across eight campuses, was recognized for graduating more Hispanic students every year than any other college.

“Statistically speaking, I should not be here,” said Miami Dade freshman Angie Flores, 19, who spoke on a panel at the event. She noted that 1.2 million students fail to graduate from high school and that of 3.2

million young people ages 16 to 24 years old, 2.2 million do not go to college. Flores also introduced Biden.

The colleges were judged by former Secretary of Education and former South Carolina Gov. Richard Riley and former Michigan Gov. John Engler.

The Aspen Institute, an independent think tank, sponsored the award after a yearlong review of 1,000 community colleges and determined the finalists on four criteria: student learning, degree completion and transfer, the number of minority and disadvantaged students that study at an institution and employment/earnings after college.



MATH WHIZZES
Contributed Photo
Congratulations to the MathCourt participants from Adm. Herbert G. Hopwood Jr. High School for showcasing their math skills in last Saturday's competition where eight made it to the finals. Kudos to the parents and coaches for their support and guidance throughout the competition.



STAR READER
Contributed Photo
Saipan International School is proud of Eric Kiser! He is a 5th grade student and in the first semester he has earned over 420 points in Accelerated Reading. That means he has read over 2,680,000 words. To make this even more impressive his average level is at the 6th grade level. Since he recently took the Star Reading test and his level is now at a high school level, we hope that he will challenge himself to read even more difficult books! Phenomenal job, Eric!

HONOR ROLL

The following are Kagman High School's first quarter awardees. Principal's List awardees have straight As in all four courses taken in the first quarter. "A" Honor students have a cumulative average between 100 and 93 percent. "B" Honor students have a cumulative average between 92 and 83 percent.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

9th grade
Reyes, Paolo Josef
San Nicolas, Clea
Santos, Trina Lyn
Villagomez, Rieko

10th GRADE
Aldan, Harumilynn
Camacho, Louvicki
Camacho, Shawn Kyle
Cepeda, Joelourd
Delos Reyes, Katelyn
Iriarte, Maria
Kapielo, Nonglak
Lina, Julie
Lizama, Ezra
Muna, Michaelle
Peter, Zachary
Pineda, Jace
Quitugua, Elvin
Sally, Vanessa

11th GRADE
Ada, Anna
Agulto, Kimberly
Aizon, Romeo

Butter, Klevelyn
Butters, Shaun
Camacho, Patrick
Camacho, Peter
Dela Cruz, Tasha
George, Kelsey
Lizama, Janica
Malwelbug, Anthony
Maratita, Shoaina
Mendiola, Kiona
Pangellinan, Jolisa
Pelep, Tracy
Punzalan, Christopher

12th GRADE
Babauta, Daisy Ann
Camacho, John Louise
Camacho, Ronnie
Dela Cruz, Akeiko
Deleon Guerrero, Judy
Fredrick, Teleesha
Jetley, Patsylynn
Kumagai, Justin
Lara, Jemma
Lotoc, Elloise Dana
Masayos, Nizelynn
Narvaez, Anjannete
Palacios, Blair
Pineda, John
Quijano, Vicorylie
San Nicolas, Sumech
Santos, Christopher
Snodgrass, Kassandra
Taitano, Eva Jean
Taitano, Jazsm

A HONOREES

9th GRADE
Paolo Josef Reyes
Clea San Nicolas

Kioki Kyler Kapileo
Mebric Navisaga
Jennifer Dela Cruz
Adrian Jade Ngalongalo
Ignasia Charm Palacios
Jadrien Eigharis Lotoc
Justice Evangelista
Michael Ian Talon
Emmalou Mae Cabrera
Samuel David Santos
Romana Tefania Chong
Francisco Babauta Jr
Dionne Deleon Guerrero
Dimitrios Camacho
Rieko Villagomez
Brett Halstead Jr.
Trina Lyn Santos
Malaina Kileleman
Jonathan Borja
Christine Connie Route
Joelin Mettao
Maelyn Matilde Naputi
Kimverlyn Mae Butters
Sharon Joanna Palacios
Christian Punzalan
Natasha Quitano
Carmen Litulumar
Justice Norman

10th GRADE
Jace Allyson Pineda
Ezra Justice Lizama
Michaelle Muna
Justin Arangorin
Vanessa Mae Sally
Elvin Quitugua
Harumilynn Aldan
Joelourd Cepeda
Andrea Juanett Camacho
Kristine Marie Babauta
Veora Jaylene Basa

Wilson Brian Calantog
Ruth Ann Torres
Maria Angela Iriarte
Katelyn Delos Reyes
Louvicki Camacho
Lou Shrine Gueverra
Dorothy Jebehn
Julie Jaceldone Lina
Rilaena Babauta
Mona Monique Indalecio
Agerico Ray III Surima
Shawn Kyle Camacho
Regina Taitano
Suvanna Sablan
Dasey Dionne Babauta
Giljoy Reyes
Nonglak Kapileo
Kayla Borja
April Jean Cabrera
Lorielyn Lacay
Jerome Ike Lizama
Jordan Mesa

11th GRADE
Tasha Dela Cruz
Anna Patricia Ada
Janica Victoria Lizama
Shaun Butters
Peter Paul Camacho
Kiona Mendiola
Tracy Pelep
Christopher Punzalan
Jolisa Pangellinan
Kimberly Agulto
Kelsey George
Anjannete Marie Butters
Sohaina Maratita
Patrick Joseph Camacho
Romeo Jr. Aizon
Anthony Malwelbug
Ashley Nicole Torres

Irene Shanece Torres
Anzuko Mel Halstead
Peter Lieto
Tyron Tumada
Jesse James Cepeda
Calvin Deleon Guerrero
Dora Rabauliman
Samson Tabilisma

12th GRADE
Allyssa Shar Arangorin
Erbert Jr. Santiago
Judy Deleon Guerrero
Christopher John Santos
Akeiko Dela Cruz
Elloise Dana Lotoc
John Louise Camacho
Sumech San Nicolas
John Eric Pineda
Vicorylie Quijano
Vanity Sherene Borja
Patsylynn Jetley
Kassandra Snodgrass
Emily Palacios
Daisy Ann Babauta
Ronnie Cherise Camacho
Eva Jean Taitano
Becky Dania Mettao
Blair Judy Palacios
Justin Ray Kumagai
Jazsm Taitano
Antonio II Bornilla
Nizelynn Masayos
Eugenio Delos Reyes
Teleesha Fredrick
Anjannete Narvaez
Shawn San Nicolas
Anette Shianne Agulto
Mark Emmanuel King
Jemma Lara
Anthony Jr. Foster

Keoki Cabrera
Ciana Faisao
Bettyei Kanai
Edu, Banaag
Salustia Limes
Keisha Iglecias
Jameel Islam
Travis Jake Santos
Bryan Roy Castro

B HONOREE

9th GRADE
Pauline Nicole Palino
Elohni Deleon Guerrero
Lance Rasa
Ian Joseph Norita
Mirika Talalemotu
Hwan Lee Jin
Joseph Sanchez
Jacob Dela Cruz
Melvin Sakisat
Amada Atalig
Cedric Ada
Asia Frederick
Nicolette Ngirausui
Peter Joshua Towai
Dori Santos
Doming Jr. Faisao
Alicia Ke
David Jonathan Palacios
Karee Matagolai
Christopher Babauta
Paul Anthony Celis
Tina Olaitiman
Kealana Taitano
Charlotte Castro
Darryl Aurelio
Sahjad Hossain
Bo Yu Chen
Yoshi Ray Mafnas

Margarita Kileleman
Yoko Mar Leon Guerrero
Jenny Sablan
Rufina Olupomar

10th GRADE
Shaira Avelgail Sally
Labian Marie Muna
Juanna Tedtaotao
Sheri Nicole Llagas
Shanita Ann Castro
Annalyn Jovann Cabrera
Francisco Lieto
Kristian Isai Ulechong
Frank Jr. Rabauliman
Allyson Kanai
Brittney Camacho
Jason Lampkin
Regino Aquino
Joshua Santos
Jonathan N. Santos
Keona Torres
Jovanna Smith
Laurese Sorbwuu Mettao
Nicialyn Doree Cabrera
John Phillip Eusebio
Justin Ocampo
Kenisha Joan Mario
Julie May San Nicolas
Malcolm Aaron
Elorene Ayuyu
Rachel Ogumoro
Andrew Salas
Christopher Manglona
David Jean Foster
Florence Pacia
Monique Agulto
Eddie Joe Guzman
Shane Romolor
Oscar Jr. Pangellinan
Realei Iskawa

Frank Blas
Jaedyn April Cepeda

11th GRADE
Russell Hocog
Brandon Santos
Courtney Agulto
Ashley Babauta
Roberta Lynn Crisostomo
Wanda Nicholas
Paula Camille Palino
Peng Fei Yu
Chantelle Cruz
Jason Rabamba
Mariann Joyce Aldan
Rosalaine Togawa
Hilarie Lasha Tagabuel
Anthony Santos
Julia Kapielo
Carlo Ballesteros
Allan Irog
Richard Jr. Maratita
Remalyn Deleon Guerrero
Janet Kaipat
Ann Romero
Rollie Dela Cruz
Jazmin Lieto
Val Enrique Taitano
Vincent Jr. Torres
Jonathan Julia Camacho
Markeda Harris
Lamarc Iguel
Byron Fujihira
Joven Tyquiengco
Michael Lampha
Francisco Quitugua
Princess Santos
Ken Nerro

12th GRADE
Stacie Ann Mizutani

Bryanna Lynn Camacho
Daniel Breton Kaipat
Joshua John Jones
Timothy Deleon Guerrero
Malia Fital
Mart Sablan
Dreana Rose Rabauliman
Joaquin Deleon Guerrero
Jake Dwight Hocog
Michael Taitano
Jesse Boy San Nicolas
Zerah Castro
Erick Garet Flores
Derick Rasa
Rachel Babauta
Marion Mckenzie
Josef Pepito Reyes
Mayjohn Catindig
Danyal Joseph Santos
Richard Santos
Nicole Lynn Sablan
Shawn Eloy Pua
Zachary Anthony Reyes
Thompson Onopey
Lawrence Magofna
Kayla Dela Cruz
Donavan Concepcion
April Welson
Holly Camacho
Felisidad Odoshi
Pennie Cabrera
Ricardo Dela Cruz
Jocelyn Camacho
Atdao Rosario
Nicole Lizama
Ana Marie Teregeyo
Mikaela Borja
Kolfrid Mettao
Colin Joe Babauta
Roxi Suda
Ludale Camacho

Life & Style

Christian Bale in China to promote Nanjing movie

BEIJING (AP)—Christian Bale was in Beijing on Monday to promote a movie about 13 young prostitutes set during Japanese army's brutal rampaging of China's wartime capital, known in the West as the "Rape of Nanking."

The Oscar winner and Batman star plays an American priest in the film "The Flowers of War," directed by one of China's best known modern directors, Zhang Yimou.

It is an adaptation of a Chinese-language novel by contemporary writer Yan Geling about 13 sex workers in Nanjing who volunteer to replace university students as escorts for invading Japanese soldiers. In the novel that translates roughly as "The 13 Women of Nanjing," the American priest leads a church that shelters



English actor Christian Bale speaks to journalists during an interview on the red carpet as he arrives for the Zhang Yimou-directed new movie "The Flowers of War" in Beijing, China, Monday, Dec. 12, 2011.

prostitutes and young female students during the invasion.

Historians say the 1937 massacre in the eastern city now known as Nanjing resulted in the slaughter of at least 150,000 civilians. China puts the number killed at 300,000, making it one of the worst atrocities of the World War II era.

Bale praised the ability of the actresses who play the young students in the movie to act fearful and upset for extended periods of time.

"Poor girls, they were al-

ways crying their eyes out," the actor said. "When I first arrived, I felt: this is just not good. I don't like that—the girls having to be upset for 10 hours a day. They were crying their eyes out for 10 hours a day, I don't know about you but for me it was exhausting—it makes you ill."

"But they were actually really good actresses because they could suddenly stop and kind of go 'hahaha, we can be like that' and I was so happy to see that."

Director Zhang said he want-

ed to show the "brilliance of humanity in a circumstance of war" through the dramatic story.

"I think as long as the story is moving people from all over the world will like it," said Zhang, whose credits include "A Simple Noodle Story," an adaptation of the Coen brothers' 1984 movie "Blood Simple," and "Under the Hawthorn Tree," a love story set in China's decadelong ultra-leftist Cultural Revolution.

The film hits Chinese screens on Friday.

Lohan says she should have listened to advisers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lindsay Lohan says she should have listened to her advisers, but her stubbornness led to many of her well-documented legal problems.

Lohan made the comments in the January-February issue of Playboy magazine, which features mostly nude photos and a brief story about the starlet.

Pictures leaked online Friday, prompting the magazine to release the issue early on its website.

The story refers to Lohan's infamous bad behavior—including two drunken driving arrests, five jail sentences and five rehab stints—as youthful



misadventures.

Lohan returns to court Wednesday to update a judge on her compliance with strict new probation requirements that include working at a morgue.

Honolulu police say Lohan reported a bag stolen from a vehicle early Sunday morning. The bag was recovered, but its contents are missing.

Actress Lindsay Lohan arrives for a hearing to determine if she violated her probation in a 2007 misdemeanor DUI case in the Airport Branch Courthouse in Los Angeles, California, Thursday, June 23, 2011.

MCT

The gospel on celebrity and pop culture

Lindsay Lohan's stolen purse found after 'wholesome' Hawaii party

Lindsay Lohan has her purse, passport and probation papers back after the bag was stolen from a car parked outside a house party she was attending Saturday in Laie, Hawaii.

The \$10,000 cash the actress had allegedly stashed in the \$5,000 Chanel purse, however, went on a permanent Hawaiian vacation.

No matter: Lohan was so stoked to get her purse and papers back, she didn't ask questions of the person TMZ described as a "suspicious-looking local," who turned up with the bag in the wee hours and said he'd found it on the street. The theft had been reported to local police.

Lohan, whose trip to Hawaii with sister Ali had been approved by the probation department as a way to avoid publicity around the release of her Playboy photo spread, was completely freaking out before getting the purse back, according to TMZ—freaking out that failure to return to the mainland in time for her Wednesday hearing might land her in jail.

Sound familiar? It should, minus some of the freaking out: Lilo's purse and passport went missing at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2010 while she was hitting a party sponsored by Belvedere vodka, making it impossible for her to get back in time for a court date. She was, at the time, allegedly promoting her now-nixed "Lovelace" portrayal of "Deep Throat" star Linda Lovelace, a role since taken over by Amanda Seyfried.

Of course, unless it's a per-

son's sole photo ID, a passport hasn't been needed to return to the mainland from Hawaii for a while now. Cannes, however, was a different story—that ID fiasco resulted in La Lohan missing a scheduled court date, setting off a chain of events that eventually found our heroine headed off to jail and rehab.

Lohan should in fact be eager to show up in Judge Stephanie Sautner's courtroom Wednesday. She's ahead of schedule to complete her community service, according to Richard Winton of the Los Angeles Times.

Sautner is the judge who in November decided Lindsay needed "structure" to succeed with her probation requirements, giving her community service and counseling goals to hit monthly in lieu of about a year and a half of jail time. Law enforcement sources told the Times. Now she's been quietly fulfilling her morgue duties, as the judge ordered.

Also, this time around Lohan apparently picked a smarter place to party, according to the Honolulu Advertiser, which noted that the town of Laie—on the island of Oahu—is predominantly Mormon.

"It was the most bizarre thing and it was bizarre on so many levels," said Laie resident Clark Cahoon, who was at the party.

"If you're looking for somewhere to go that doesn't have drugs or alcohol, you won't find anything more wholesome than a party at a Mormon home." (*Christie D'Zurilla*)

Jennifer Aniston named 'sexiest woman of all time'

Forget that "Sexiest Woman Alive" nonsense. Jennifer



Aniston

magazine.

In their explanation of why the 42-year-old "Horrible Bosses" star topped the poll, the editors of Men's Health wrote, "Funny is sexy, and Jennifer Aniston is funny. Her down-to-earth persona makes her seem attainable, and anyone who's seen her in 'Office Space' has to admit she makes even pieces of flair look good."

Those with a stake in Team Aniston in the Aniston vs. Angelina Jolie war that has raged for nearly six years will be pleased to know that the competition wasn't even close this time: Jolie is No. 10 on the list.

Aniston also beat out Raquel Welch, Marilyn Monroe, Britney Spears, Madonna, Ursula Andress, Bettie Page, Pamela Anderson and Jane Fonda.

For her part, however, Aniston's idea of a sexy woman doesn't exactly gibe with that of the average Men's Health reader. She told the magazine she would award the title to either Brigitte Bardot or Gloria Steinem.

Though the unlucky-in-love Aniston has recently been stepping out with actor Justin Theroux, she told Elle magazine that she's in no rush to have a baby with him. Suggesting this particularly sexy genetic line may end with Aniston. (*Patrick Kevin Day*)

From the Los Angeles Times' Ministry of Gossip blog: <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/gossip/>

First Year Death Anniversary In Loving Memory of



Natividad Tudela Castro

"Daling"

We, the family, humbly invite all of our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the passing of our dearly beloved unto eternal life.

Daily Mass will be offered at San Vicente Church beginning December 15, 2011 at 6:00pm and on December 16 to 23, 2011, Mass will be offered at 5:00am.

On the final day, December 23, 2011, Rosary will be said at 5:30pm at the house of Helen & Jesus H. Sablan at Chalan Kiya, Kulot Di Rosa followed by dinner.

Your presence and prayers will be greatly appreciated.

Un Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank you

The Family

Brad Bird enters live-action fray with 'Mission Impossible 4'

By COLIN COVERT
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

MINNEAPOLIS—Brad Bird has made some of the more brilliant and thrilling animated movies of the past two decades, if not of all time. He pushed the boundaries of feature animation with "The Iron Giant," and won best-animated-feature Oscars with "The Incredibles" and "Ratatouille," merging commercial and critical success. But Bird scorns complacency, quoting Steve Jobs' 2005 commencement address at Stanford University: "Stay hungry. Stay foolish."

Now Bird is dreaming bigger, navigating a new high-stakes testing ground. His live-action directing debut is the stunt-heavy mega-budget Tom Cruise adventure "Mission: Impossible—Ghost Protocol," opening Friday.

The production traveled to locations in Russia, the Czech Republic, Canada, the United States and Dubai, where Cruise rappels down the face of the towering Burj Khalifa skyscraper. Surprisingly, Bird said dangling one of the world's top stars from the world's tallest building isn't so different from directing computer-generated cartoon characters.

"It's all shots and storytelling," Bird said. While live-action films are using more of the techniques of digital animation, he knew that going on location and "actually, physically" hanging Cruise a quarter-mile above the city would give viewers a visceral thrill that could be captured no other way.

The "Mission: Impossible" franchise



Director Brad Bird is seen on the set of "Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol," from Paramount Pictures and Skydance Productions. MCT

offered Bird considerable latitude. Cruise, who also produces the films, has hired a different director for each of its four installments. In this outing, Cruise's team includes returning co-star Simon Pegg and newcomers Jeremy Renner and Paula Patton playing colleagues unknown to each other and cut off from official support. Without a fixed blueprint to follow, Bird said, he was free to chart his own path, giving his chapter a more playful feel and a hero who is extraordinarily skilled yet

still human.

"I liked the fact that each one had different vibes to them. Tom wanted each film to have the flavor of its director, and that's one of the things that attracted me." Some of Bird's favorite films are action movies laced with humor "and not T-shirt lines that are meant to be quoted later. Not wink-wink-nudge-nudge humor, either, but stuff that comes out of character."

Bird loves "Raiders of the Lost Ark," he said, "because it has this wonderful

balance between the energy and pace and peril of the action sequences and the way you're continually engaged by the character of Indiana Jones. You like him and there's a wit to the way he's presented. I could say the same for the first 'Die Hard' movie. There's a lot of humor in it, but it never comes at the expense of the action."

One such moment comes when Cruise's superspy, Ethan Hunt, is informed he'll have to climb across the sheer glass face of the Burj tow-

er aided only by some glue gloves. Time is running out, but there's a cut to Cruise's thunderstruck expression and a beat of hesitation before he tackles the stunt.

"I really hate it when action stars think they look cool by blithely facing danger and acting mildly bored," Bird said. "Roger Moore's James Bond always looked like he was between saunas. Sean Connery was clearly a tough guy, but he'd get in these action scenes and you'd see his life flash before his eyes. That made you invest in the character because he became real."

The "Mission: Impossible" stunt sequences presented Bird with challenges like nothing he'd ever faced. "The sequence on the Burj was so logistically complex to pull off. Not just to be up there with our actor but also filming it in Imax," whose special 70mm cameras are huge, heavy and noisy. "We definitely made it about as hard as we could make it and still manage to survive and tell the tale."

The biggest bonus from directing live action, Bird said, is spontaneity. "I like being able to throw something at an actor right before the camera goes on and see something happen. Then you have something magic that happened that one time only. There's a scene in the film between Jeremy Renner and Simon Pegg that was done all in one take where they threw each other curves and responded to the curves, and it was this incredibly alive moment. That's the kind of thing you can't have happen the same way in animation."

'Dragon Tattoo' star Rapace bursts into Hollywood

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

BEVERLY HILLS, California (AP)—Maybe it was inevitable that whoever landed the lead in the original "Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" would become Sweden's next big export.

Yet with or without a blockbuster role, Noomi Rapace always felt she would break out beyond the borders of her homeland.

Two and a half years after the debut of "Dragon Tattoo," the first of her three eye-popping turns as late author Stieg Larsson's untamed heroine, Rapace has stormed into Hollywood in Robert Downey Jr.'s latest Sherlock Holmes adventure and Ridley Scott's "Prometheus," a cousin to his sci-fi hit "Alien."

Rapace felt right at home among Downey's ensemble for "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows," while she grew up on "Alien," "Thelma & Louise" and other films from director Scott.

"Ridley Scott is one of my heroes since as long as I can remember. I kind of actually think that he saved me sometimes, because I always felt like an outsider in Sweden. I didn't feel Swedish. I always felt like something is different with me," Rapace said in an interview to promote "Sherlock Holmes," which opens Friday. "The Swedish people are quite repressed, and they hold back a lot of things. It's like people are really afraid of conflicts and emotions, and nobody really says anything straight to you. ...

"So in a weird way, I always felt

that I was going to leave kind of what I came from. But I could never imagine I was going to end up with these people and doing movies with the best people in the world."

Rapace, 31, appeared in her first movie at age 7 while living in Iceland before her family moved back to Sweden, and she has been acting steadily for the past decade.

But it was her performance as brilliant, traumatized, ferocious and feral computer hacker Lisbeth Salander in "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" that was her exit visa from Sweden.

All three films adapted from Larsson's best-sellers became worldwide hits, with Hollywood quickly jumping in for David Fincher's English-language remake of "Dragon Tattoo," opening just days after "Sherlock Holmes."

The world of Lisbeth, with her tattoos, body piercings and anarchic spirit, was not unknown to Rapace, who went on her own rebellious, punk-rocker tear in her early teens.

"There was a gap there when I was



In this Dec. 3, 2011 photo, actress Noomi Rapace, from the upcoming film "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows," poses for a portrait in Beverly Hills, Calif. The film opens in theaters Dec. 16, 2011. AP

not into acting and I was against everything. First, I was into doing judo and kung fu. Then I was drinking a lot," Rapace said. "So I kind of lost track for a while, then I came back, I pulled myself together and I decided when I was 15 that I'm going to get sober and I'm going to become an actress."

She enrolled in a drama high school in Stockholm and built an impressive list of credits in Swedish film and TV

in her 20s. When the part of Lisbeth came her way, she even wore some of her old punk clothes and shoes. Rapace came to the film pre-perforated, reopening an old stud hole of her own for one of Lisbeth's piercings.

To capture Lisbeth's intensity, Rapace also had to revive the wild spirit of her teen years.

"I had to just wake up that sleeping demon and say, 'It's time to come back now,'" Rapace said.

In the "Sherlock Holmes" sequel, Rapace plays a gypsy fortuneteller who teams with Downey's great detective and sidekick Watson (Jude Law) against their archrival, Moriarty (Jared Harris).

Downey met with Rapace and was sold on her for the role even before he saw her in "Dragon Tattoo."

"Then I saw the movie and thought, my God, how are we going to take all that she's capable of and make this role worth her while and show a different side of her?" Downey said.

"She can kick ass, that girl," said "Sherlock Holmes" director Guy Ritchie. Rapace's Lisbeth was "scary. There's a very strong element of danger about her that she maintains like a wild animal, in a way."

Doing interviews for the "Dragon Tattoo" films, Rapace realized her English was weak, so she set out to teach herself the language. Barely a year later, she was fluent in English when she turned up on set for "Sherlock Holmes" and Scott's "Prometheus."

Due in theaters next summer, "Prometheus" is the filmmaker's return to

science fiction, though Scott and his collaborators are cagey about whether it's a prequel to 1979's "Alien," in which Sigourney Weaver's Ellen Ripley first encountered the unstoppable space monster.

Co-starring with Charlize Theron and Michael Fassbender, Rapace plays an archaeologist on an exploratory mission that runs into trouble in deep space.

"It's not a clean prequel" to "Alien," Rapace said. "It's definitely related. I think you will see connections," including some between her character and Weaver's Ripley.

"They are kind of in the same family. Even though I think that my character is kind of more feminine," Rapace said. "She's more naive in the beginning and a believer and full of hope, and then in the middle of the movie, she kind of changes into more of a warrior and a survivor."

Early next year, Rapace is set to shoot the crime story "Dead Man Down" with Colin Farrell, reuniting her with "Dragon Tattoo" director Niels Arden Oplev.

Hollywood's version of "Dragon Tattoo" stars Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara, who delivers her own fierce take on Lisbeth. Rapace said she was never interested in playing Lisbeth again herself, even though the film has the potential to launch a blockbuster trilogy whose commercial success would far eclipse the Swedish adaptations.

"I was done with her, and I felt like I left her when I was finished with the third movie," Rapace said. "I couldn't see any reason of kind of doing it again. I never want to repeat myself. I always want to move on and do new things. So no, it was not for me."

Meryl Streep covers Vogue magazine for first time



AP
In this cover image released by Vogue, actress Meryl Streep, star of the film "The Iron Lady," is shown on the cover of the January 2012 issue of "Vogue."

NEW YORK (AP)—Meryl Streep may be considered one of the finest actresses around, yet she says she believed her career was over 20 years ago.

Streep, now 62, tells Vogue magazine she was offered three different roles to play a witch after turning 40. She believed it meant women in her age group were "grotesque on some level," and told her husband "It's over."

Streep graces the January cover of Vogue magazine for the first time and jokes in the magazine she's the "oldest person" to do so.

Next, she plays the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the new film "Iron Lady." She'll portray Thatcher from age 49 to 85. The film opens January 13.

The January issue of Vogue goes on sale Dec. 20.

Barry Manilow hospitalized

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Barry Manilow has been shaking his hips on stage for decades, and now he has to have those muscles repaired.

A spokeswoman for Manilow says the 68-year-old entertainer was hospitalized Monday for surgery to remove fluid and repair torn muscles

in his hips.

Manilow waited until he performed his 1,000th Las Vegas concert and ended his seven-year run at two resorts there before having the surgery.

Publicist Annie Jeeves says Manilow will be in recovery for six weeks before performing in Chicago on Feb. 2.



Billy Joel gets portrait at NYC's Steinway Hall

NEW YORK (AP)—The Piano Man is now officially a Steinway man.

A Billy Joel portrait has been unveiled in New York City at Steinway Hall, home to the famed piano maker Steinway & Sons.

Joel is one of only two living artists included in a collection featuring greats such as Hungarian composer Franz Liszt (list). He's the only non-classical performer.

The 62-year-old pop legend joked Monday about his painting's proximity to Vladimir Horowitz's, saying he doesn't know "how crazy" Horowitz is about having him that close.

Joel's painting features him standing upright in a leather jacket, with a Steinway in the foreground.

Joel says the jacket was one of the few items of clothing bought without a female companion. He says he wore it for years but his girlfriend recently dismissed it as a 1980s relic.

Billy Joel poses next to his portrait at the unveiling of his Steinway Hall portrait at the flagship store of Steinway & Sons, in New York, Monday, Dec. 12, 2011.



AP

'Survivor' star Hatch released from RI prison

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—Reality television star Richard Hatch has been released from a state prison after serving a nine-month sentence for failing to pay back taxes.

Hatch, the winner of the first season of the CBS reality show "Survivor," was released Monday, a state prison official said.

Hatch, 50, served six weeks at

a state minimum-security facility as a transition after spending most of his sentence in federal prison.

The Newport resident had spent more than three years in prison for not paying taxes on his \$1 million "Survivor" winnings. He was released in 2009 and ordered to refile his 2000 and 2001 taxes and pay what he owed.

He went back to prison in March for violating the terms of his supervised release by failing to settle his tax bill. He had claimed he was "financially destitute."

Hatch said Monday night he was "happy" to have been released but didn't know where he would be staying. He maintained he's innocent of failing to pay his taxes.

There is no cash prize.

Demi Lovato, Selena Gomez to ring in MTV New Year

NEW YORK (AP)—Hey Justin Bieber—Selena Gomez already has plans for New Year's Eve. Gomez will be ringing in the New Year in New York City's Times Square with fellow teen star Demi Lovato for MTV's live special. MTV said Monday that both are due to perform, along with singer Jason Derulo and rappers J Cole and Mac Miller. The night's festivities will be hosted by Tyler Posey of MTV's "Teen Wolf" and Lovato. The show will air from MTV's Times Square studios. Fans can bid to be part of the audience. Proceeds will go to FWD, to help with the crisis in East Africa. The show will air live at 11 p.m. EST.

Mother-in-law's scanty clothes get dressing-down from wife

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: I am an educated woman in my late 20s. I have been married for several years to a wonderful man, and we were recently blessed with our first child.

Since our wedding, my relationship with my mother-in-law has been an evolving one. Since the inception of "Desperate Housewives" on TV, she seems to believe she's a character on the show. She trots around in revealing clothing looking like a street-walker. She spends most of her time gossiping with her newfound buddies who are half her age, and who seem to delight in dressing her up to make her the talk of the town.

As a little girl, when I dreamed of how my life would be as a married woman, it was never like this. My dreams never included a MIL who enjoys seeing people look at her in disbelief as she struts across the room. I don't want this to be an example for my daughter. Confronting her doesn't work—she responds with guilt and mockery. In other words, she always wins. I'm at a loss and have given up trying to figure her out. Please help

DESPERATE HOUSEWIFE

DEAR DESPERATE: As an educated woman, it's time for you to smarten up and accept your mother-in-law for the "character" she is—warts and all. You were wrong to expect her to fulfill the fantasy role you created for her. She's not ready to do it—and she may never be.

The way she dresses will not influence your daughter; you will do that. Your mother-in-law's attire is a reflection only on her, not you. Remember that. If she is so youthful in spirit that she has been accepted by a younger group of women, stop judging her and perhaps even learn from it. She's not over the hill yet. So stop trying to push her there, and you'll both be happier.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Joe," and I have been married for 12 years. I have a daughter from a previous marriage and he has a son from a previous relationship. My daughter is married and lives in another state.

My 22-year-old stepson, "Junior," lives with us. He has a history of drug and alcohol abuse and has stolen from us. I recently discovered that another item of mine was missing. I told Joe it has to stop—that I can't live like a prisoner in my own home. Joe will not kick Junior out of the house. Joe said HE would leave, but that he won't put Junior out on the street like a dog.

Our marriage was solid until Junior's problems started a year ago. I'd never ask my husband to make a choice. Junior is his son. I, on the other hand, feel like a stranger in my own home. We barely speak now and have been sleeping in separate rooms. I am at a loss. Abby, have you any advice?

STRANGER IN MY OWN HOME

DEAR STRANGER: Yes. You and your husband should consult a therapist who specializes in treating addictions. Your husband loves his son, but he is enabling him to continue using by turning a blind eye to his stealing and not enforcing consequences. Sometimes love has to be tough. Because your marriage has deteriorated to the point that you no longer speak or share a bedroom, recognize that you must look out for your own welfare because your husband seems unwilling or unable to.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Stolen guitar found, but Pearl Jam autographs gone

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP)—Police in Vermont say a stolen 1972 Fender Telecaster electric guitar autographed by members of Pearl Jam for a teenager with a brain tumor has been recovered—but the signatures are gone. The Burlington Free Press reports two men have been jailed on charges of possession of stolen property. Police say the autographs were sanded off. Ben Hardy said his ailing brother Josh received the guitar autographed by members of Pearl Jam in 1991 in Seattle. It was arranged by the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Josh died several months later at the family's home in Durham, N.H. The guitar and other items were taken from Hardy's home between Thanksgiving and Dec. 5 while he was away. Arrested were

25-year-old Jeffrey Leduc and 51-year-old Timothy Crews, both of Burlington.

Finalists announced for young adult writers prize

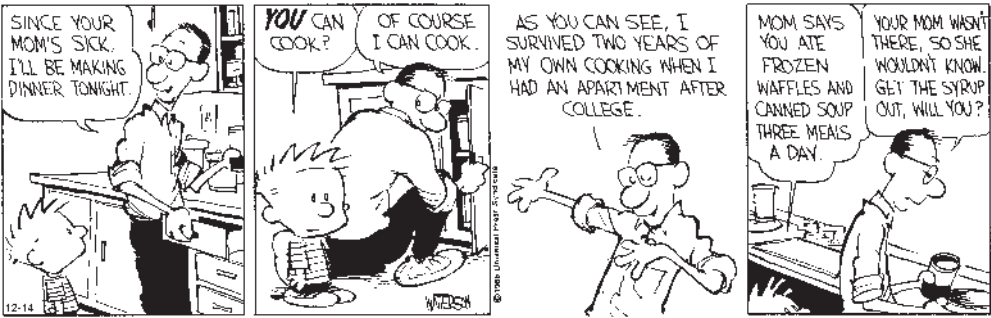
NEW YORK (AP)—Five debut novels are finalists for the American Library Association's William C. Morris award for young adult writers who have never published before. The nominees were announced Monday. They include Rae Carson's "Girl of Fire and Thorns," Jenny Hubbard's "Paper Covers Rock," Guadalupe Garcia McCall's "Under the Mesquite," Ruta Sepetys' (ROO'-tuh seh-PEH'-tees) "Between Shades of Gray" and John Corey Whaley's "Where Things Come Back." The winner will be announced Jan. 23 at the library association's midwinter meeting in Dallas.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson Garfield®

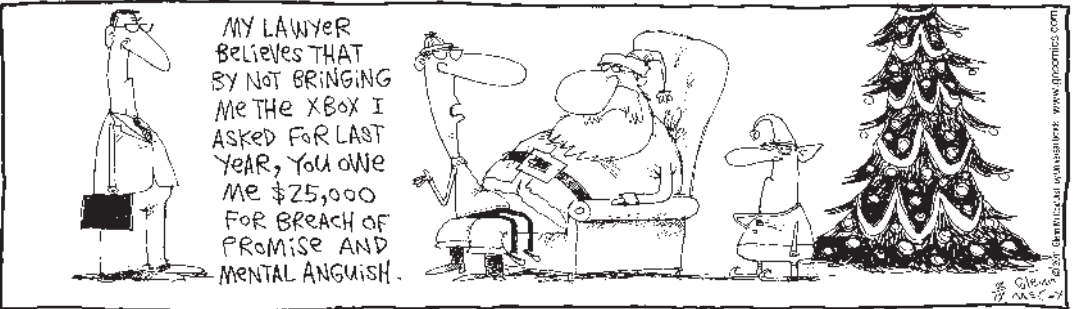
By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Suitable President Bobbsey wheels

4 Young boxer? out twin 14 Rodgers partner

7 Litigious sort 26 Cartoonist 1 Poet 15 "Catcher in the —"

8 Middle Goldberg 27 Help 2 Hammerhead 19 Obtain

Eastern dish 28 Inscribed pillar 30 "Suburgatory" 3 Farm vehicle 21 Eastern potentates

11 Ball game segment 33 Ice cream flavor 5 Arm bones 23 Island dance

13 New Orleans neighborhood 37 Sorrow 38 Slow critter 8 Sharp irritation 25 LummoX

16 Barbie's companion 39 Ear-related 40 Spring mo. 10 NYC airport 28 Discard

17 Hosiery shade 29 Alternative to "his/her"

18 Shaft of light 30 Texas Hold 'em declaration

19 "An Inconvenient Truth" narrator 31 United nations

20 Enticement 32 Automobile

21 Chris of tennis lore 34 1942 vessel

35 Tittle

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-14

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Vanessa Hudgens, 23; Jackson Rathbone, 27; Dee Wallace, 63; Patty Duke, 65.

Happy Birthday: Focus on finance, consolidation and doing your best to ease stress and get your personal papers in order. You'll have the opportunity to make smart moves that will put you in a much better position. Be prepared to make a decision instantly and you will not have to face competition. Knowing what you want is the key to your success. Your numbers are 6, 9, 22, 26, 29, 35, 42.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Show everyone how things are done. You'll shine if you step into the limelight. Socializing with colleagues will allow you to network with people who can influence your future. Your ideas will impress and interest someone important. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Be careful how you approach sensitive issues. Not everyone will feel the same way you do. Focus on appreciating the ones you love. Shopping will lead to some good purchases, but be careful not to spend more than you can afford. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Use your imagination to get ahead. The ideas you share now will help you advance in the future. Your abilities to initiate change and to teach and learn from being a team player will separate you from the crowd. ****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may know what you want to accomplish, but an emotional conflict will hold you back if allowed to spin out of control. If change is needed, you must be willing to make the adjustments quickly so you can move on without worry. **

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Make alterations at home or to the way you live that will save money and ease stress. Taking care of paperwork will help you get set for the new year. A good idea will bring great response from family and friends. *****

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You are on the right track mentally, emotionally and financially, but you have to take better care of yourself physically. Make sure you get rest and avoid any activities that have the potential to lead to injury. *****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Overly emotional actions will bring the same in return. You have to monitor what you do and say if you want to get things accomplished. Put your energy into doing something constructive. Set an example and you will gain respect. **

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Do your best to please those around you. Planning festive events that bring people together will enhance your relationships with your business and personal friends. Fix up your home to reflect your mood. Your suggestions will be inspired. ****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Put a push behind the things you have to finish before the year ends. It's important to work

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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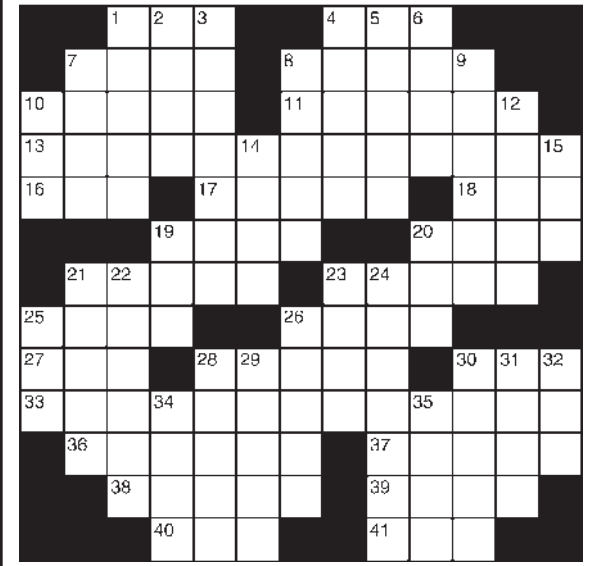
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Expect to have visitors sharing your space. Open your doors to friends and family and you will be given all sorts of excellent suggestions for some of the issues that have been bothering you. Favors will be granted. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Let your emotions out. Share your thoughts and your game plan for the future. Not only will you receive the help you need, you'll also find comfort in knowing that you don't have to do things alone. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't argue when understanding is required. Listen attentively and offer what you can to ease someone's stress. Love is in the stars, and planning a special evening with someone you fancy will enhance your relationship. ***

Birthday Baby: You are an instigator, a leader and a smooth operator.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun



SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	8	3	7	5	9	1		
9						4		
					7			
				7				
		3	8	4	2	1		
			5					
	4							
3							6	
7	9	4	6	1	5	8		

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD By DAVID QUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

EMPLOYEE PENSION PLANS Solution: 10 letters

G E G S P R I O R I T Y T O E
R O M L P P V H S A C A P M
O U A O U A M E R U V X T P
S N N N C N Y L U D A M E I L
S T D I E N E O L N R D O O
K S I D O I I D U T E I Y N Y
C M A F N N I E N T N A S S E
O R A V E R G W I S L A O E R
T M E X E N A R U T V U F M S
S S O C I R E R Y I R O F I A
T C T N D M A B N C R H E T L
R L R H E N U G E M C H O R T A
Y A T N C Y S M E F I L B R R
E I T E L I G I B L E D O A Y
W M S E T U B I R T N O C P L

Yesterday's Answer: Cookware

Benefits, Cash, Claim, Contributes, Deduct, Directly, Earning, Eligible, Employers, File, Form, Funds, Gross, Hold, Income, Insurance, Invest, Labor, Life, Loyalty, Lump, Maximum, Money, Offer, Option, Part-time, Payout, Plans, Policy, Priority, Rate, Retirement, Salary, Savings, Source, Stocks, Sums, Taxed, Trade, Union, Value, Withdrawn

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$27
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$39
• 3-Liner with picture	\$24	\$42
• 5-Liner with picture	\$36	\$57

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Seahawks pull away for win over Rams, 30-13



SEATTLE (AP)—Doug Baldwin picked a national stage to remind the rest of the NFL what they passed up in last April's draft.

Baldwin, an undrafted rookie out of Stanford, blocked a first-quarter punt that was returned by Michael Robinson 17 yards for a touchdown, then caught a 29-yard TD pass from Tarvaris Jackson in the third quarter as the Seattle Seahawks pulled away for a 30-13 win over the staggering St. Louis Rams on Monday night.

Seattle (6-7) won for the fourth time in five games and kept alive its slim hopes for reaching the postseason. The Seahawks likely would need to win out to potentially make the playoffs a reality, but they're at least back in the conversation after a 2-6 start.

"As far as my expectations go, I expected to be successful. I didn't know how successful, but I expected to be able to come in here and win a job in some capacity, because if you don't have that confidence in yourself you're not going to win a job," Baldwin said. "To be where I am now, no I didn't expect this. But at the same time I'm not satisfied."

Marshawn Lynch topped 100 yards rushing for the fifth time in the last six games, finishing with 115 on 23 carries. He scored a touchdown in his ninth straight game on a 16-yard run with 2:57 left to put away Seattle's 13th win in its last 14 games against the Rams.

Seahawks fans threw bags of Skittles into the end zone as Lynch celebrated his ninth rushing touchdown this season, and he tied a franchise record with nine consecutive games with a TD.

"I could have caught them, that's how close they got to me," Lynch said of the flying candies.

Baldwin finished with seven catches for 93 yards and Steven Hauschka was 3 of 4 on field goal attempts for the Seahawks.

Sam Bradford started for St. Louis (2-11) despite a high left ankle sprain that's bothered him for nearly two months and forced him to miss last week's game at San Francisco. Bradford barely practiced this week and it showed as he was rusty and made poor decisions. Bradford was 12 of 29 for



Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Doug Baldwin (15) runs after a catch for a touchdown in the second half of an NFL football game against the St. Louis Rams, Monday, Dec. 12, 2011, in Seattle.

AP

193 yards, was intercepted by Brandon Browner on the first play of the second half and nearly picked off on a handful of other throws.

Steven Jackson had 50 yards rushing on 11 carries by halftime, including dashes of 11 yards twice and 10 yards once. He was limited to just 42 yards on 15 carries when the teams met a few weeks ago and the Rams were trying to exploit the Seahawks' secondary.

This time, Jackson disappeared in the second half—aside from a 50-yard catch-and-run on a screen pass—and finished with 63 yards rushing on 20 carries. He stood on the sidelines with his legs crossed during a goal-line possession in the fourth quarter while Cadillac Williams got the first crack at scoring.

The Rams eventually ran five plays from the 1 without Jackson touching the ball—thanks to a taunting penalty on Seattle's Richard Sherman. Jackson finally got a carry on a second third-and-goal and scored, but only after screaming on the sideline.

Jackson's score pulled the Rams within 23-13, but the outcome was already decided.

Baldwin's influence on the game was evident from the start, when he took a pitch from Leon Washington on a kick-off reverse and returned it beyond the 40. Seattle was later forced to punt, but it was Baldwin racing from the outside to down the punt at the Rams 6.

Then he made the biggest of his three fine special teams plays.

Coming almost entirely unblocked off the right end, Baldwin took a punt off the foot of Donnie Jones. The bounding ball hopped up into the arms of Robinson, who went the final 17 yards for an early 7-0 Seahawks lead.

Aside from a few receptions, Baldwin was mostly quiet until late in the third quarter. He snagged a 22-yard reception across the middle to convert a third-and-11 near midfield. On the next play, Baldwin faked going inside and broke to the sideline, losing Darian Stewart in coverage. Tarvaris Jackson found Baldwin and he got just in-

side the pylon to give the Seahawks a 14-point lead.

"We just expect that out of him now," Tarvaris Jackson said. "We expect him to go out and make plays every week."

Tarvaris Jackson wasn't his best, but didn't need to be against the Rams. He went 21 of 32 for 224 yards and connected with nine receivers.

Lynch, the focus of most of the attention after his 148-yard, two-touchdown performance against Philadelphia, never broke off a big run, but grinded his way to another 100-yard performance. He capped his night with his ninth rush-

ing TD of the season, breaking tackles on his way to the end zone, then getting pelted with Seahawks fans chucking bags of candy, knowing Lynch's affinity for Skittles.

Seattle topped 100 yards rushing for the sixth straight game, accomplishing that feat for the first time in the same regular season since 1996. It came behind an offensive line that lost its third starter for the season a week ago when Russell Okung went down with a torn pectoral muscle.

Hauschka also hit field goals of 23, 42 and 48 yards. Josh Brown connected from 46 and 29 yards for the Rams.

Dolphins fire Tony Sparano as coach

MIAMI (AP)—Even before the Miami Dolphins fired Tony Sparano on Monday, names of potential successors were being bandied about.

Bill Cowher? Jeff Fisher? Jon Gruden?

"I'd like to find a young Don Shula if that's possible," owner Stephen Ross said.

It's no wonder Ross craves some stability. Since Shula retired in 1996, no coach has made it through five full seasons in Miami.

That includes Sparano, fired three games from the end of his fourth season, and one day after the Dolphins lost to the Philadelphia Eagles to fall to 4-9. The defeat ended a recent surge by the Dolphins after they lost their first seven games.

With two other NFL teams already in the market for a new coach, Ross didn't want to wait any longer to start shopping. Sparano's dismissal came hours after the Kansas City Chiefs fired coach Todd Haley. Jacksonville fired

coach Jack Del Rio on Nov. 29.

General manager Jeff Ireland's status had also been in question, but he'll be retained and take part in the coaching search, Ross said.

Todd Bowles, who had been assistant head coach and secondary coach, becomes interim head coach. He's the sixth coach since 2004 for the Dolphins, who haven't won a playoff game since 2000 and haven't reached the Super Bowl since 1984.

The Dolphins play Sunday at Buffalo, but they're already assured of their third consecutive losing season, the longest such streak since the 1960s.

"The results speak for themselves," Ross said at a hastily called news conference. "We're looking to becoming a winning organization, and I thought this was the best time to make the change and let us go in a direction that will allow us to become that."

Joining Ross at the news conference was Ireland, who hired Sparano in Miami and also worked with him in Dallas.

"It's a difficult day for me," Ireland said. "He's a friend of mine. He has been a colleague of mine from before we got here together."

Ross is expected to pursue a coach with star power. But with Ireland remaining in charge of personnel, someone of Cowher's caliber might not be interested in the job.

On the other hand, Ireland stressed the need for an experienced coach, which might rule out hiring an assistant.

"You're looking for the best candidate out there, a guy who has been in the trenches before," Ireland said. "You're looking for some of the same qualities I saw in Tony—a tireless worker, a guy who understands offense and defense. We'll talk about those things as the weeks go by, and exactly what we're looking for, and iron out a plan that best fits what Mr. Ross is looking for."

Bowles, in his fourth season with the Dolphins, is among those who will be interviewed.

Chiefs fire Haley after 5-8 start to season

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—The Kansas City Chiefs fired coach Todd Haley on Monday with the team he led to the AFC West title less than a year ago stuck at the bottom of the division following a series of devastating injuries and discouraging blowouts.

The Chiefs dropped to 5-8 after Sunday's 37-10 loss the New York Jets, their fifth loss in six games. Kansas City committed 11 penalties for 128 yards in another dismal performance, including a 15-yarder on Haley for unsportsmanlike conduct that may have ultimately sealed his fate.

"Timing in these situations is always difficult. There never seems to be a right time," Chairman and CEO Clark Hunt said. "We just felt the inconsistent play the team has experienced throughout the season, including yesterday's game, made today the right day to do it."

Haley wasn't the only coach fired Monday as the Dolphins also dumped Tony Sparano. Jacksonville's Jack Del Rio was fired last month.

The combustible Haley, who took over a team that won six games the previous two seasons under Herm Edwards, leaves with a 19-27 record in his first NFL head coaching job. But despite the surprise AFC West title last season, it's hard to tell if the team improved under his watch.

The quarterback situation is a mess, even with Matt Cassel healthy, and

the offensive line has three players in Ryan Lilja, Barry Richardson and Casey Wiegmann who may not be back. Despite a background on offense, Haley only managed to coax the unit into an average of 293.8 yards, which ranked 28th in the league, and 177.4 yards through the air—30th out of 32 teams.

Defensive coordinator Romeo Crennel will serve as interim coach for the final three games, and general manager Scott Pioli said he will be considered for the permanent job. Crennel was 24-40 in four seasons as head coach of the Cleveland Browns.

Hunt and Pioli met late Sunday to discuss Haley's future, and they decided to meet again Monday morning. After coming to their decision, they spoke to Haley in private, and then informed the rest of the coaching staff.

It was Crennel who met with the players.

"Romeo is going to do things the way Romeo knows how to do them," Pioli said. "I've not worked with Romeo when he's been a head coach. I guess we'll find out what's similar and what's different, but I know this, I know Romeo is very similar to Todd. Todd was very passionate about football, Todd was very passionate about this football team, these players, and he was very passionate about winning. Romeo has a lot of those very qualities."

Clippers say no deal to proposed trade for Paul



LOS ANGELES (AP)—The day began with the Los Angeles Clippers rejecting a proposed deal by the New Orleans Hornets for Chris Paul and it ended with them claiming five-time All-Star guard Chauncey Billups off waivers and re-signing center DeAndre Jordan.

General manager Neil Olshey said Monday the team felt “the cost was just too high” in what it would have to give up to ac-

quire Paul.

Olshey declined to identify whom the Clippers had offered in exchange for Paul but their package reportedly included center Chris Kaman, reserve guard Eric Bledsoe, forward Al-Farouq Aminu and their No. 1 pick in the 2012 draft. Reports suggested the Hornets also wanted guard Eric Gordon included.

“There wasn’t one piece or another piece that killed this deal,” Olshey said. “The aggregate compensation that we were

going to have to convey to them was just too much and it was going to hamstring our franchise in the long term.”

It’s the second time in five days that a deal moving Paul to Los Angeles fell apart. Last week, NBA Commissioner David Stern nixed a three-team trade by the league-owned Hornets, Los Angeles Lakers and Houston Rockets that would have sent Paul to the Lakers.

“This is a superstar player that is obviously in a delicate situation with his current franchise,” Olshey said. “We just felt right now we’re just not going to be able to meet where we’re equally satisfied with the outcome.”

The Clippers used their remaining \$3.5 million in salary cap room to claim Billups. The 35-year-old point guard

was waived by the New York Knicks last weekend.

“We’ve tried eight, 10 times over the years to try and trade for Chauncey. It’s never worked out before,” Olshey said. “This is another great addition to our roster. He’s going to be a great fit with our guys.”

Billups averaged 16.8 points, 5.4 assists and 2.6 rebounds in 72 games with Denver and the Knicks last season. He was traded to New York in February. He helped lead Detroit to the NBA championship in 2004, when he was MVP of the finals.

Olshey said the decision to acquire Billups was independent of the team rejecting the Hornets’ offer.

“This is not a precursor to another move. This is not laying

the groundwork for another opportunity,” he said.

The Clippers had a need for Billups since Bledsoe is expected to be sidelined six to eight weeks while recovering from right knee surgery on Oct. 7.

“He has the ability to add a lot to our organization, on and off the court,” coach Vinny Del Negro said about Billups. “He’s not ready to retire. He has too much left in the tank.”

The team matched a \$42.7 million, four-year offer sheet from the Golden State Warriors for restricted free agent Jordan, something Olshey told him they would do once they used their cap space.

The 23-year-old center appeared in a career-high 80 games last season, averaging 7.1 points, 7.2 rebounds and 1.78 blocks

while making 66 starts.

“He did a nice job for us last year. We’re expecting big things from him,” Del Negro said. “DeAndre brings a defensive presence for us, shot-blocking, he runs the court well, he’s very young still, he’s only going to get better.”

Olshey said the team would now turn its attention to discussions on signing Gordon to a contract extension.

The Clippers signed Caron Butler to a \$24 million, three-year deal Friday, giving them a boost at small forward.

“This is a better team that’s on the floor now and in the future than what would have been put together had we had to convey the package that they had asked for,” Olshey said about the Hornets’ offer.

Quiet Pennsylvania town center stage for Sandusky faceoff



BELLE-FONTE, Pa. (AP)—A sleepy country

town better known for fly fishing than courtroom drama takes center stage Tuesday for a face-to-face encounter between a disgraced Penn State coach and the young men who say he sexually assaulted them as children in showers and campus locker rooms.

Jerry Sandusky, a former assistant football coach at Penn State, will confront at least six accusers who claim that he violated their innocence and preyed on their weakness, using a charity that was inspired by a biblical parable.

Sandusky, 67, is charged with more than 50 counts of child sex-abuse involving 10 boys he met through the children’s charity he founded. A judge will decide if prosecutors have enough evidence to send the case to a trial.

The defense often waives preliminary hearings, although it can also use the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses and explore their credibility.

But Sandusky’s lawyer, Joe Amendola, said Monday his client welcomes the hearing.

“We plan to proceed with Jerry’s hearing, and Jerry is looking forward to the opportunity to face his accusers,” Amendola said. He said there had been no plea negotiations before the hearing.

He would only say, “Maybe,” when asked if he would call Sandusky to testify.

The drama will unfold in a quiet, central Pennsylvania town of just over 6,000 with Victorian homes and fly fishermen, in a courthouse framed by 26-foot columns built in the 1830s. Lawyers, probation officers and clerks went about their business on Monday while an official numbered spots on the sidewalk outside court for network news vans. Barricades were piled neatly on the courthouse lawn, while lighting equipment was stored behind the veterans’ memorial nearby.

A lawyer for one of the teen-agers scheduled to testify bristled at Sandusky’s description

of the encounters as child’s play, or “horsing around.”

“My client said, ‘There’s nothing fun about what happened with me,’” Slade McLaughlin said last week, adding that he believes the Penn State scandal has unleashed “a watershed moment” in the understanding of child sexual abuse.

At least six of the accusers are expected to testify at the hearing, which could last two days.

Last month Sandusky told NBC’s Bob Costas and The New York Times that his relationship to the boys who said he abused them was like that of an extended family. Sandusky characterized his experiences with the children as “precious times” and said the physical aspect of the relationships “just happened that way” and didn’t involve abuse.

Sandusky retired as Penn State’s longtime defensive coordinator in 1999, a year after the first known abuse allegation reached police. Penn State fired football coach Joe Paterno last month, saying he didn’t do enough to investigate allegations against Sandusky.

In 1998 a mother told investigators Sandusky had showered with her son during a visit to the Penn State football facilities. Accusations surfaced again in 2002, when graduate assistant Michael McQueary reported another alleged incident of abuse to Paterno and other university officials.

The grand jury probe began only in 2009, after a teen complained that Sandusky, then a volunteer coach at his high school, had abused him.

Sandusky first groomed him with gifts and trips in 2006 and 2007, then sexually assaulted him more than 20 times in 2008 through early 2009, the teen told the grand jury.

The two university officials charged with perjury and failure to report abuse—former Penn State athletic director Tim Curley and former university vice president Gary Schultz—face a preliminary hearing Friday in Harrisburg.

Prosecutors may need to call McQueary—and perhaps Paterno—to lay out those allegations.



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Ichihara wins TDHC Black Jack tourney

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Etsuko Ichihara topped a field of 119 competitors to win a cash prize of \$75,000 along with being deemed the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino's final Black Jack Challenge champion over the weekend.

Ichihara's chip count of 8,050 held the lead coming into the final five hands by 1,375. She hung on to the top spot in the clutch and beat the dealer in the final round to seize top prize. She also was presented with a crystal championship trophy.

Ichihara was fortunate to draw a 20 in the last round that edged out the dealer's 19.

She bested fellow Japanese contestants Noboru Watanabe and third place finisher Na Young Kim.

Notably, only 75 in chips separated the runner up and third place finishers.

Watanabe bet 1,000 on the last hand, but his 18 fell just short.

The bet was would not have been enough to catch Ichihara anyways, but he almost dropped \$14,000 in prize money.

Kim shoved out 500 and was dealt a pair of nines, which she opted split.

Kim doubled-down after seeing the first card on both cards and was left with a 17 and 20.

The dealer showed a 5 and drew a 10 and a 4 for a standing

hand of 19.

Watanabe briefly took the lead during the final five hands, but settled for \$28,000 and second place.

Kim floated around in the middle of the pack, but managed to take third prize and \$12,00; the pair also was awarded crystal trophies.

Other finalists in descending order included Japan's Masayuki Onuma, Korea's Hyun Woo Son, and Japan's Yuji Otomo and Tomatsu Sakuma; they each won \$1,000 in consolation prizes.

Ichihara and Kim were the only female competitors.

The finalists started out with a 5,000 bank, where the mini-

mum bet was set 25 with a 1,000 limit.

The final round lasted one and a half shoes; there were eight decks in a shoe.

On Saturday players started out with a 3,000 bank and the field competed to land one of 35 spots in the semifinals.

As mentioned above this past event marked TDHC's final Black Jack Challenge.

Next year, they plan to offer six invitation-only Baccarat Challenges.

The first event is set for Jan. 14 through Jan. 15 and organizers are hoping for at least 50 participants. From there, events are scheduled to take place every other month.



Japan's Etsuko Ichihara, front row second left, smiles with family members after winning her cash prize of \$75,000 along with the Black Jack Challenge championship trophy after the conclusion of the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino event on Sunday night.

THE CRANK

From Page 28

lot—sometimes two or three times a day, running and cross-fit training with my longtime friend Jose Quan. I always look forward to coming back to the CNMI and I really want to thank everyone for all of their support.”

It is safe to say that Camacho is quite popular right now on Saipan as three different cars pulled over to greet him during the interview held along Beach Road in Garapan.

“That’s the best part about coming back, I really do appreciate the love and I take it all of it back with me. It’s what keeps me pushing forward, especially on bad days when I’m fighting injuries or during tough workouts when it feels

like I’m clinging to my last breath,” he said.

Camacho had a humbling 2011, being eliminated in the quarterfinals in the BJJ World Championships in Long Beach California back in June.

He was submitted with a chokehold, but managed a Top 8 placing out of a field of about 130 competitors; he marks it as his first loss. He was also battling some minor injuries throughout the year, however none are considered serious or career ending.

“I was disappointed about losing that quarterfinals match, but all in all I look at 2011 as a good year for me. I learned a whole lot and right now I feel great and fully recovered from some nagging injuries. And most of all I got my hunger back to get back in the cage,” he said.

Needles to say, Camacho has

returned his focus to MMA bouts in 2012. Nothing is confirmed, but he is expected to land a match at some point next year.

In addition to his training and quality time with his family, Camacho managed to visit William S. Reyes Elementary School last Friday to speak to a couple of classrooms about setting goals.

“The kids were just awesome. It was really an impromptu thing, but I think it went pretty well. My friend Pat Alepuyo recently finished his last day over there before being transferred and I went to his former fourth grade class and another group of second graders during my visit. I wanted to tell them not to be afraid to dream big. I also wanted to share with them some of my goals and encourage them to start with small

short-term goals and build their way up to long-term aspirations. I also told them that actually writing them down physically and carrying them with them every day is a good way to turn the goals into reality,” he said.

Camacho also plans on visiting Hopwood Junior High School on Wednesday morning.

Camacho carries with him a military-style dog tag with five of his lifelong goals engraved on the face plate.

On the top of the list is to become an Ultimate Fighter Champion. Underneath that is to become a BJJ black belt, which he narrowly missed this past year.

The third goal says “three percent,” which is estimated to be the small group of people that do what it takes to actually make their dreams come true.

with words and hand gestures.

Rangamar said the team does not agree with the league’s decision not to also discipline the referee. He also said GBL’s code of conduct does not make any sense.

The next season is set to take place from April to June 2012. As of now, Pelisamen will be eligible after conclusion of the second leg of the series.

Mobil 78 – Estolas 22, Fernando 14, Demapan 11, Sharry 8, Maratita 7, Lizama 7, Ruloked 5, De Guzman 4.

Ol’Aces 73 – Pelisamen 27, T. Diaz 22, Olaitiman 7, Clayton 6, Z. Diaz 4, Camacho 4, Iginoef 1.

Scoring by quarters: 18-21, 36-33, 57-52, 78-73.

will feature the top teams in the elimination round. Wild Bill’s reigned supreme in Pool A of the 10-team FA Cup after posting a perfect 4-0 win-loss record, while Inter Godfather’s ruled Pool B with similar unbeaten card.

Wild Bill’s went on to advance to the semis after thumping Korean Football Association on Saipan on Nov. 27, 3-1, while Inter Godfather’s marched to the Final Four following a 2-1 victory over Tan Holdings FC.

MOBIL

From Page 28

Ol’Aces’ Tony Diaz then heated up after the break, scoring nine points in the third quarter.

Mobil fortunately drained a trio of long balls to maintain a 57-52 margin heading into pay-off period.

Ol’Aces would not go away easily, but Mobil’s Jun Estolas turned it on in the clutch, as usual, and mustered 13 points in the fourth quarter, including four pressure-packed free throws in the final minutes that sealed the deal.

Estolas led Mobil with 22 points in the game, while Ol’Aces’ Freddie Pelisamen led all scorers with 27.

After the game Pelisamen allegedly started an altercation with referee Noel Delos Santos in the parking lot.

“There was an unfortunate incident between our official (Delos Santos) and (Pelisamen) after the game. While (Pelisamen’s) car was about to leave the parking lot, he exited from the driver’s seat and approached Delos Santos who was standing with a group of players. Then (Pelisamen) punched (Delos Santos) twice in the chest,” according to a statement from league director Rey Perez.

Perez also said that Pelisamen performed the act for no reason and that league officials quickly alleviated the situation and had Pelisamen leave the premises.

As a result, league organizers

83rd minute.

After grabbing the lead, Wild Bill’s protected the driver’s seat by playing solid defense against Paire and the former capped the come-from-behind victory with Tanapon Unsa’s goal in the closing minute of the second half.

In the second semis game, Masatoshi Otsuka duplicated Thoensaket’s feat, drilling twin goals for Inter Godfather’s. Otsuka put Inter in the scoreboard with his goal in the 25th minute, while Matthew Holley upped

the lead to 2-0 when he scored in the 34th minute. Then at the end of the first half, Inter Godfather’s lead was sliced to one, 2-1, as MP United A’s Moon Bin Hong made a goal in the 38th minute. Hong was the lone player to score for MP United A, as his teammates continued to struggle in the second half, while Inter Godfather’s drew one more goal from Otsuka in the 76th minute.

This weekend’s championship showdown between Wild Bill’s and Inter Godfather’s

MDX

From Page 28

to tie the match, 55-all, .03 of a second left in regulation. SCS had the inbound from the backcourt and did not have enough time to pull up for a decent shot, sending the game into overtime.

In the extra five minutes of the match, SCS had a handicap, playing with only four players—Gilbert Miranda, Rocyl Ritual, Ferdie Tobias and Ed Echavez. Jun Pantaleon left the floor at the end of the regulation after his left eye was accidentally poked by MDX’s Alex Lauron in a loose ball play in the closing seconds of the fourth quarter. Earlier in the fourth quarter, SCS, which showed up for the match with only six players, had already lost Jessie Mina due to five fouls.

With limited options on offense and a hole on defense, SCS was held to only two free throws in overtime and allowed MDX to score 10 easy points, four of them coming off fast-break plays.

SCS had a chance to win the game in regulation when it led by four, 54-50, going into the final two minutes left. However, MDX moved within one, 53-54, after Zack Babauta split his charities and Lauron went 2-for-2 in the ensuing plays, while Tobias muffed two technical free throws and SCS failed to cash in on its attempts and lost the ball twice.

With the time down to less than 10 seconds, MDX gambled on giving up a foul on Miranda to stop the clock. The ploy paid off as Miranda had

local apparel brands.

The fifth goal says “Marianas Family,” which stands for his immediate family and extends out to the entire CNMI.

“I always wanted to be a champion, and after that I want to return home and give back to my family and friends and even help others the community. Again, I can’t thank everyone enough for believing and supporting me. You have no idea how much it means to me,” he smiled.

a split, giving SCS a precarious two-point lead, 55-53, 7.1 ticks to go in regulation.

MDX sued for time and when the game resumed, Ben Lisua received the inbound pass from Lauron and the former drove toward the right baseline. Lisua was then clobbered by SCS defenders and decided to kick out the leather to a cutting Tenorio, who pulled up for a 10-footer and banked it in. The game-tying basket was only Tenorio’s second field goal of the night.

Lauron top-scored for MDX with 26 points, making six of them in the opening quarter to lift his team to a 17-6 advantage. SCS wiped out the lead in the second period and forced a deadlock at halftime, 30-30, after outgunning MDX, 24-13, off the combined 18 points of Miranda and Ritual.

SCS then grabbed the upper hand in the third, 35-30, after MDX went scoreless in the first four minutes of the second half. MDX then launched an 8-0 run to regain the lead, but SCS answered with an 8-1 windup to retake the driver’s seat at the end of that canto, 43-39. SCS managed to keep the lead in the closing minutes until Tenorio’s crucial shot sent the game into overtime and the former eventually lost the match due to lack of manpower.

MDX 65 – Lauron 26, Palacios 11, Lisua 9, Johanes 6, Tenorio 5, Babauta 5, Lansang 2,

SCS 57 – Miranda 18, Ritual 15, Tobias 10, Mina 8, Pantaleon 3.

Scoring by quarters: 17-6, 30-30, 43-39, 65-57.

WILD

From Page 28

fore Wild Bill’s players started getting their acts together and scored three goals in a span of eight minutes. Jeeraphong Thoensaket broke the ice for Wild Bill’s, making his first goal in the 75th minute. Four minutes later, it was Adul Detdon’s turn to score to put Wild Bill’s in the lead and Thoensaket made it a 3-1 advantage when he found the back of the net anew in the

2011 Saipan Swim Club Jingle Bell Fun Run



Runners leave the Garapan Fishing Base during last week's 2011 Saipan Swim Club Jingle Bell Fun Run.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



A mother and son leave the starting area en route to the finish line at the pavilion near the Kilili Beach Park.



Taiyo Akimaru shows the goodies he received after completing the race.



The second wave of runners participating in the race leaves the Garapan Fishing Base.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Chad Lowe leads two other participants of the race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Young runners cruise along the Beach Road pathway.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Two runners sprint to the finish line.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel nears the finish line.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Tom Linden slows down as he heads to the finish line.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

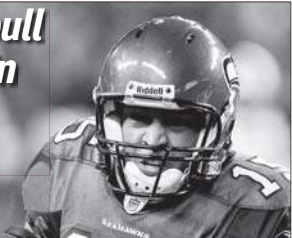


Mother and daughter Roxie and Soleil Lamar keep each other's company in the race to Kilili Beach Park.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Seahawks pull away for win over Rams, 30-13

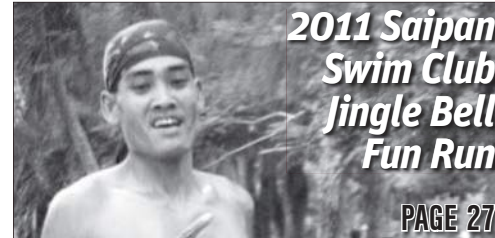
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

'The Crank' gears up for MMA in 2012

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER

Saipan's Frank "The Crank" Camacho is back on island to spend the holidays with his family, but said he will still train twice a day as he has plans on returning to the octagon in 2012.

He arrived early last week after spending a week in Guam training with some fellow Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu students at the Purebred Gym.

The Purebred Gym is a satellite gym of Master Lloyd Irvin MMA, Camacho's head trainer, which is headquartered in Maryland.

"I visited some friends and family in Guam and also got to toss with Ground Fu's Jess "Spiderman" Taitano," Camacho said in an interview on Friday.

Taitano has an upcoming bout in Japan.

Camacho added, "It's great to be back. I have been training a

See THE CRANK on Page 26



CNMI mixed martial arts practitioner Frank "The Crank" Camacho poses with second grade students of William S. Reyes Elementary School during his visit to last Friday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Wild Bill's vs Inter Godfather's in finals

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

Wild Bill's and Inter Godfather's will dispute the championship in the 2011 NMIFA Men's FA Cup, following their separate semis wins last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex.

The first finals berth went to Wild Bill's, which beat Paire Football Club, 4-1, while Inter Godfather's notched the second and last championship ticket after a 3-1 triumph over MP United A. The winner-

take-all finals will be played this Sunday at 3pm after the 12pm consolation game between Paire and MP United A.

Wild Bill's had a weeklong break before playing in the semifinals and the lull seemed to affect the team's tempo, as it went scoreless in the first half. Paire was the first team to break into the scoreboard, courtesy of Steve McKagan's goal in the 58th minute.

Paire retained the lead until midway in the second half be-

See WILD on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Wild Bill's Daniel Wollak chases the ball down the sideline during their quarterfinal game against Tan Holdings FC in the Men's FA Cup at the Oleai Sports Complex Field. Wild Bill's won and also topped Paire in the semis last Sunday to advance to the finals against Inter Godfather's, which defeated MP United A in the other semis pairing.

Mobil grinds out win against Ol'Aces

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER

Mobil defeated Ol'Aces, 78-73, in a very physical battle for the fifth seed in the Garapan Basketball League-IT&E Cup single-elimination wild card playoffs Monday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

The win allowed Mobil to finish the eliminations with a win-loss record above .500 at 4-3. Ol'Aces, meanwhile, fell to

a slate of 3-4.

The Mobil-Ol'Aces tiff was a continuation of their rained-out match.

Ol'Aces buried a handful of free throws in the opening 10 minutes and came away with a 21-18 lead after the opening quarter.

Mobil started slow, but its defense came alive in the second quarter and a pair of timely 3-pointers helped the team press ahead, 36-33, at halftime.

See MOBIL on Page 26



Mobil's Angelo Fernando streaks to the basket in this GBL-IT&E Cup file photo against FGC at the Garapan Basketball Court.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

MDX outlasts SCS in overtime

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

MDX kept its perfect record intact after surviving SCS Heavy Equipment in overtime, 65-57, during the lone game in the 2011 DLX Basketball Invitational Friendship League last Monday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

MDX improved to a 5-0 mark for solo first place in the nine-team field, while SCS absorbed its first loss in four matches. The

MDX-SCS tiff was the only game played last Monday night, as 8th Division was awarded a win via forfeit over Saipan Boys in the first match.

In the second game, Dexter Tenorio canned the equalizer and MDX took advantage of a depleted SCS crew in overtime to eke out the eight-point win.

Tenorio drilled a banked shot from the left wing off a kickoff pass from Ben Lisua

See MDX on Page 26

MDX's Dexter Tenorio, seen here going for a jumper against SCS' Jun Pantaleon during the third quarter of their game in the DLX caging last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court, canned the game-tying basket in regulation. MDX went on to win in overtime, 65-57.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

